# REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE

| 1. AGENCY USE ONLY *(Leave blank)* | 2. REPORT DATE<br>February 1995 | 3. REPORT TYPE AND DATES COVERED<br>Final |
|---|---|---|

| 4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE<br>Evidence and Inference in Educational Assessment | 5. FUNDING NUMBERS<br>G.  N00014-91-J-4101<br>PE.  61153N<br>PR.  RR 04204<br>TA.  RR 04204-01<br>WU.  R & T 4421573-01 |
|---|---|
| **6. AUTHOR(S)**<br>Robert J. Mislevy | |

| 7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)<br>Educational Testing Service<br>Rosedale Road<br>Princeton, NJ  08541 | 8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER<br>RR-95-8-ONR |
|---|---|

| 9. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)<br>Cognitive Sciences<br>Code 1142CS<br>Office of Naval Research<br>Arlington, VA  22217-5000 | 10. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY REPORT NUMBER<br>N/A |
|---|---|

**11. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES**

None

| 12a. DISTRIBUTION/AVAILABILITY STATEMENT<br>Unclassified/Unlimited | 12b. DISTRIBUTION CODE<br>N/A |
|---|---|

**13. ABSTRACT** *(Maximum 200 words)*

Educational assessment concerns inference about students' knowledge, skills, and accomplishments. Because data are never so comprehensive and unequivocal as to ensure certitude, test theory evolved in part to address questions of weight, coverage, and import of data. The resulting concepts and techniques can be viewed as applications of more general principles for inference in the presence of uncertainty. Issues of evidence and inference in educational assessment are discussed from this perspective.

DTIC QUALITY INSPECTED 4

| 14. SUBJECT TERMS<br>Bayesian inference networks, cognitive psychology, evidence, inference, performance assessment, probability, psychometrics, test theory. | 15. NUMBER OF PAGES<br>79 |
|---|---|
| | 16. PRICE CODE<br>N/A |

| 17. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF REPORT<br>Unclassified | 18. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF THIS PAGE<br>Unclassified | 19. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF ABSTRACT<br>Unclassified | 20. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT<br>SAR |
|---|---|---|---|

# EVIDENCE AND INFERENCE IN EDUCATIONAL ASSESSMENT

Robert J. Mislevy

# REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE

| 1. AGENCY USE ONLY *(Leave blank)* | 2. REPORT DATE<br>February 1995 | 3. REPORT TYPE AND DATES COVERED<br>Final |
|---|---|---|

| 4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE | 5. FUNDING NUMBERS |
|---|---|
| Evidence and Inference in Educational Assessment | G.  N00014-91-J-4101<br>PE.  61153N<br>PR.  RR 04204 |
| **6. AUTHOR(S)**<br>Robert J. Mislevy | TA.  RR 04204-01<br>WU.  R & T 4421573-01 |

| 7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)<br>Educational Testing Service<br>Rosedale Road<br>Princeton, NJ  08541 | 8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER<br>RR-95-8-ONR |
|---|---|

| 9. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)<br>Cognitive Sciences<br>Code 1142CS<br>Office of Naval Research<br>Arlington, VA  22217-5000 | 10. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY REPORT NUMBER<br>N/A |
|---|---|

**11. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES**

None

| 12a. DISTRIBUTION/AVAILABILITY STATEMENT<br>Unclassified/Unlimited | 12b. DISTRIBUTION CODE<br>N/A |
|---|---|

**13. ABSTRACT** *(Maximum 200 words)*

Educational assessment concerns inference about students' knowledge, skills, and accomplishments. Because data are never so comprehensive and unequivocal as to ensure certitude, test theory evolved in part to address questions of weight, coverage, and import of data. The resulting concepts and techniques can be viewed as applications of more general principles for inference in the presence of uncertainty. Issues of evidence and inference in educational assessment are discussed from this perspective.

DTIC QUALITY INSPECTED 4

| 14. SUBJECT TERMS<br>Bayesian inference networks, cognitive psychology, evidence, inference, performance assessment, probability, psychometrics, test theory. | 15. NUMBER OF PAGES<br>79 |
|---|---|
| | 16. PRICE CODE<br>N/A |

| 17. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF REPORT | 18. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF THIS PAGE | 19. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF ABSTRACT | 20. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT |
|---|---|---|---|
| Unclassified | Unclassified | Unclassified | SAR |

# Evidence and Inference in Educational Assessment[1,2]

Robert J. Mislevy

Educational Testing Service

January, 1995

# Evidence and Inference in Educational Assessment

### Abstract

Educational assessment concerns inference about students' knowledge, skills, and accomplishments. Because data are never so comprehensive and unequivocal as to ensure certitude, test theory evolved in part to address questions of weight, coverage, and import of data. The resulting concepts and techniques can be viewed as applications of more general principles for inference in the presence of uncertainty. Issues of evidence and inference in educational assessment are discussed from this perspective.

*Probability isn't really about numbers; it's about the structure of reasoning.*

Glenn Shafer (quoted in Pearl, 1988)

# Introduction

Harold Gulliksen, reviewing the field of *Measurement of Learning and Mental Abilities* at the 25th anniversary of the Psychometric Society in 1961, described "the central problem of test theory" as "the relation between the ability of the individual and his [or her] observed score on the test" (Gulliksen, 1961). Twenty-five years later, at the 50th anniversary, Charles Lewis observed that "much of the recent progress in test theory has been made by treating the study of the relationship between responses to a set of test items and a hypothesized trait (or traits) of an individual as a problem of statistical inference" (Lewis, 1986). This trend represents practical progress to be sure, providing solutions to formerly intractable problems such as tailoring tests to individual examinees (e.g., Lord, 1980, Chap. 10) and sorting out relationships in patterns of achievement in hierarchical schooling systems (e.g., Aitkin & Longford, 1986).

Perhaps more importantly in the long run, it represents a certain progress in understanding. The early literature on test theory blurred the distinction between models for students' knowledge or accomplishments on the one hand, and, on the other, an observer's state of knowledge about the forms and parameters of these models. The statistical developments Lewis spoke of helped researchers explicate the evidence that test data convey for assessment problems framed under trait and behaviorist psychological conceptions of abilities. Ironically, the very success of statistical reasoning for assessment problems cast under the trait and behaviorist paradigms gave rise to a misconception that statistical reasoning applies to assessment framed *only* within those paradigms.

We can, however, view test theory as the application of principles that have evolved over hundreds of years in many fields, to deal with such pervasive problems as multi-stage inference and multiple sources of disparate evidence. While recent developments in cognitive and educational psychology may suggest student models and observational strategies quite different from those employed by, say, Spearman, Thurstone, and Thorndike, practical work under alternative perspectives inevitably faces these same general

problems in some form. The same general principles of inference—central among them the concepts and tools of mathematical probability—can help explicate relationships between evidence and inference for a broader discourse about students' knowledge, learning, and accomplishments than is traditionally associated with standard test theory and standardized achievement tests. This paper aims to elaborate this claim and to illustrate points with vignettes from current projects.

The following section reviews basic ideas about evidence and inference, drawing in part from Daavid Schum's (1987) monograph, *Evidence and inference for the intelligence analyst*. Jurist John Henry Wigmore's contributions to understanding the structure of complex bodies of evidence and evidentiary arguments are then discussed (Anderson & Twining, 1991; Wigmore, 1937) with reference to analogous problems in jurisprudence and assessment. Conceptual machinery from mathematical probability-based reasoning that can be applied to these structures is then considered. A series of examples uses this approach to structure inference concerning proportional reasoning, mixed-number subtraction, foreign-language learning, and accomplishment in a studio art program. The focus in each case is modeling evidentiary reasoning, through an inferential model built around a psychological model for competence in the domain. The interplay between probability-based reasoning *within* a model and non-mathematical reasoning *about* the model is then discussed; the former provides a framework for reasoning through the complexities Wigmore described, the latter emphasizes a perspective of criticizing and improving that framework.

## Evidence and Inference

> *Questions of evidence are continually presenting themselves to every human being, every day, and almost every waking hour, of his life... Whether the leg of mutton now on the spit be roasted enough, is question of evidence ... which the cook decides upon in the cook way, as if by instinct; deciding upon evidence, as Monsieur Jourdan talked prose, without having ever heard of any such word, perhaps, in the whole course of her life.*
>
> Jeremy Bentham, 1827, p. 18-19.

### Data versus Evidence

Inference is reasoning from what we know and what we observe to explanations, conclusions, or predictions. We always reason in the presence of uncertainty. The

information we work with is typically incomplete, inconclusive, amenable to more than one explanation. We attempt to establish the weight and coverage of evidence in what we observe. But the very first question we must address is, "Evidence about what?" Schum (1987, p. 16) stresses the crucial distinction between *data* and *evidence*: "A datum becomes evidence in some analytic problem when its *relevance* to one or more hypotheses being considered is established. ... Evidence is relevant on some hypothesis [conjecture] if it either increases or decreases the likeliness of the hypothesis. Without hypotheses, the relevance of no datum could be established." The same data can thus prove conclusive for some inferences, but barely suggestive for others; it can provide complete coverage for some inferences, yet miss core issues of others; it can constitute direct evidence for some inferences and indirect evidence for others, yet be wholly irrelevant to still others.

Conjectures, and the understanding of what constitutes evidence about them, emanate from the variables, concepts, and relationships of the field within which reasoning is taking place—the paradigm, to use Kuhn's (1970) term. Educational assessments provide data such as written essays, correct and incorrect marks on answer sheets, presentations of projects, or students' explanations of their problem solutions. These data become evidence only with respect to conjectures about students and their work—conjectures constructed around notions of the character and acquisition of knowledge and skill, and shaped by the purpose of the assessment and the nature of the inference required. For example:

- From a *behavioral* perspective, the focus is on chances of success in a domain of relevant tasks. A student is characterized in terms of "overall proficiency" in the domain in terms of, say, the score that would be expected if she were administered all tasks in the domain, and conjectures would concern her level of proficiency in relation to the tasks themselves or to other students, or her behavior in other situations. Responses to a sample of tasks constitutes direct evidence for a conjecture about proficiency so construed.

- From an *information processing* perspective, competence is construed in terms of "production rules," and conjectures concern the sets of production rules (production systems) students have at their disposal. A production rule comprises descriptions of conditions which, when recognized, trigger actions. An example is "**smaller-from-larger-when-borrowed-from**: When there are two borrows in a row, the student does the first one correctly, but for the second one she does not borrow;

instead she subtracts the smaller from the larger digit—e.g., 824-157=747"
(VanLehn, 1990, p. 228). Individual production rules can be correct or erroneous;
a given production system might handle certain features of the substantive domain
correctly but miss others.

- From a *constructivist* perspective, a student comes to understand the important
attributes and relations of specific contexts and circumstances (including social
circumstances), and through wider experiences extends, connects, and generalizes
the patterns so that they may be applied more broadly and more effectively.
Conjectures concern the degree to which a student has developed useful
knowledge, both within and across particular contexts and circumstances, and the
nature of that knowledge (including, for example, the kinds of meaning the student
can construct in new situations).

This presentation does not argue that any of these perspectives represents "the
truth." All are constructions, organized around patterns that have been perceived in aspects
of human learning and problem-solving. Each can be useful in certain circumstances to
improve learning and problem-solving, much as wave and particle models for atomic
phenomena are each advantageous for certain physics problems. Our concern is that
practical work under any psychological perspective must proceed with less than perfect
knowledge. To this end, examples of evidentiary problems in assessment will be
illustrated with examples from all three perspectives.

## Kinds of Inference

Schum (1987) distinguishes deductive, inductive, and abductive reasoning, all of
which play essential and interlocking roles in educational assessment:

- *Deductive reasoning* flows from generals to particulars, within an established
framework of relationships among variables—from causes to effects, from diseases
to symptoms, from the way a crime is committed to the evidence likely to be found
at the scene, from a student's knowledge and skills to observable behavior. Under
a given state of affairs, what are the likely outcomes? Formal logic includes
instances of conclusive deductive reasoning; accepting "A implies B" and learning
"not B," we conclude "not A" with certainty. In practice, deductive reasoning is
often probabilistic; under different states, various possibilities become more or less
likely but not completely determined.

- *Inductive reasoning* flows in the opposite direction, also within an established framework of relationships—from effects to possible causes, from symptoms to probable diseases, from students' solutions or patterns of solutions to likely configurations of knowledge and skill. Given outcomes, what state of affairs may have produced them?

- *Abductive reasoning* (a term coined by the philosopher Charles S. Peirce) proceeds from observations to new hypotheses, new variables, or new relationships among variables. "Such a 'bottom-up' process certainly appears similar to induction; but there is an argument that such reasoning is, in fact, different from induction since an existing hypothesis collection is enlarged in the process. Relevant evidentiary tests of this new hypothesis are then *deductively* inferred from the new hypothesis." (Schum, 1987, p. 20; emphasis original).

The theories and explanations of a field suggest the structure through which deductive reasoning flows. Inductive and abductive reasoning depend likewise critically on the same structures, as the task is to speculate on circumstances which, when their consequences are projected deductively, lead plausibly to the evidence at hand. Determining promising possibilities, we reason deductively to other likely consequences— potential sources of corroborating or disconfirming evidence for our conjectures, by means of which we may further develop our understanding (Lakatos, 1970).

A detective at the scene of a crime reasons abductively to reconstruct the essentials and principals of the event. Anything he sees, in light of a career of experience, can suggest possibilities; ways things might have happened which, reasoning deductively, could have produced the present state of affairs (e.g., documents, eyewitness reports, physical evidence). Given tentative hypotheses, does inductive reasoning from other observations conflict or fit in? When they conflict, does their juxtaposition spark a new hypothesis? A successful investigation leads to a plausible explanation of the case, which, reasoning deductively, appears to lead convincingly to the data at hand. This is the "theory of the case" the prosecution brings to trial.

Severely limited in time and place, a jury cannot "begin at the beginning" in the same way the detective did. Their charge is to decide whether the mass of evidence the prosecution presents to support this particular hypothesis is sufficiently credible, or whether it falls short when the defense's rebuttals and alternative explanations are considered. The jury addresses a problem of inductive inference—"Does the evidentiary

fact point to the desired conclusion (not as the only rational inference, but) as the inference (or explanation) most plausible or most natural out of the various ones that are conceivable?" (Wigmore, 1937, p. 25)—within a framework constructed only through substantial abductive inference on the part of the investigator and the prosecution. Even though the detective may have more information and better insight than the jury ("I *know* the butler did it, but I just can't prove it yet"), the credibility of the legal system is enhanced by this separation: The decision is made on the basis of public presentation of evidence and argument, by different people from those who gathered the evidence and structured the inferential framework.

## Probability-Based Reasoning

*According to the assumption of situated cognition, most cognitive activity occurs in direct interaction with a situation, rather than being mediated by cognitive representations. Cognitive representations play a role when something goes wrong. They are resources that humans have for dealing with situations when their more direct connection with objects and persons are not working well. ... The capabilities that we characterize as critical thinking, then, need to include recognition of circumstances when reflection and evaluation might be helpful in overcoming some difficulty that has emerged in the normal course of activity or conversation.*

Greeno, 1989, p. 130.

We do not build probability models for most of the reasoning we do, either in our jobs or our everyday lives. We continually reason deductively, inductively, and abductively, to be sure, but not through explicit formal models. Why not? Partly because we use heuristics, which, though suboptimal (e.g., Kahneman, Slovic, & Tversky, 1982), generally suffice for our purposes. More importantly, because much of our reasoning concerns domains we know something about. Greeno (*op. cit.*, p. 130) continues, "rather than assimilation of information, concepts, and procedures, we can consider learning in a domain as becoming able to think with and about the information, concepts, and procedures of the domain. This includes coming to know the generative principles of the domain, that is, learning what makes the information and procedures of the domain work, rather than simply learning what they are." Attending to the right features of a situation and reasoning through the right relationships, informally or even unconsciously, provides some robustness against suboptimal use of available information within that structure.

Some robustness, but not invincibility. Heuristics, habits, rules of thumb, standards of proof, and typical operating procedures guide practice in substantive domains, more or less in response to what seems to have worked in past and what seems to have led to trouble. This inferential machinery co-evolves with, and is intimately intertwined with, the problems, the concepts, the constraints, and the methodologies of the field (Kuhn, 1970, p. 109). Difficulties arise when inferential problems become so complex that the usual heuristics fail, when the costs of unexamined standard practices become exorbitant, or when novel problems appear. It is in these situations that more generally framed and formally developed systems of inference provide their greatest value.

Given key concepts and relationships, inferential objectives, and data, how *should* reasoning proceed? How can we characterize the nature and force of persuasion a mass of data conveys about a target inference? Workers in every field have had to address these questions as they arise with the kinds of inferences and the kinds of evidence they customarily address. Currently, the promise of computerized expert systems has sparked interest in principles of inference at a level that might transcend the particulars of fields and problems. Historically, this quest has received most attention in the fields of statistics (unsurprisingly), philosophy, and jurisprudence. In the sequel we focus on the concepts and the uses of probability-based reasoning.

Two traditions of "probability" have arisen over time: mathematical or Pascalian (after Blaise Pascal) probability, and epistemic or Baconian (after Francis Bacon) probability. Those of us in test theory are more familiar with Pascalian probability. For our purposes, the essential elements are a specified space of outcomes, or sample space; a space of parameters, or variables that determine how likely outcomes are; and a function that specifies the probabilities of "Pascalian events," or subsets of the sample space, given values of parameters. Probabilities are numbers that satisfy the following requirements: (i) an event's probability is greater than or equal to 0, (ii) the probability of the event that includes all possible outcomes is 1, and (iii) the probability of an event defined as the union of a collection of disjoint events is the sum of their individual probabilities (Kolmogorov, 1950); they correspond to strength of belief. It is portentous that given parameter values, we can express the relative chances of a Pascalian event as compared to any other events; and given an event, we can express the relative plausibility of a given parameter value as compared to any other parameter value. We shall have more to say about this aspect of Pascalian probability-based inference below.

In contrast, a "Baconian event" is closer to the everyday notion of "something that has happened." Baconian probability refers to a conviction of belief or persuasion, without necessary reference to a numerical characterization of its strength, a specifiable sample space (things that "might have happened," in addition to "what did happen"), a parameter space (potential "true states of affairs" that might have led to the observed event), or functions that explicate the relationships between what is observed and what is inferred. We may nevertheless be able to say that given the evidence, we feel that one conjecture is more likely than another (Cohen, 1977). We find ourselves mildly or strongly convinced of a conjecture given a body of data, and may be able to lay out arguments that persuade us or give us pause. This Baconian perspective underlies much judicial evidentiary reasoning, and from this perspective, John Henry Wigmore, Dean of Evidence at Northwestern University the first third of the century, was able to identify, if not resolve, some central inferential challenges.

## Wigmore on Evidence

Wigmore, like Jeremy Bentham a hundred years before him, was troubled by the agglomeration of "rules of evidence" that had evolved in Anglo-American law over the centuries. Each rule, specifying particular kinds or aspects of information that may or may not be introduced to jurors as evidence in a case, is intended to reduce the chances of some presumed inferential error. Beyond the fact that certain rules offend sensibility (Quakers could not give testimony in some jurisdictions because they refused to swear an oath of truthfulness), Wigmore felt that what was missing was "the big picture:"

> The study of the principles of Evidence, for a lawyer, falls into two distinct parts. One is Proof in the general sense, the part concerned with the ratiocinative process of contentious persuasion, mind to mind, counsel to Judge or juror, each partisan seeking to move the mind of the tribunal. The other part is Admissibility, the procedural rules devised by the law, based on litigious experience and tradition, to guard the tribunal (particularly the jury) against erroneous persuasion. Hitherto, the latter has loomed largest in our formal studies—has, in fact, monopolized them; while the former, virtually ignored, has been left to the chances of later acquisition, casual and empirical, in the course of practice.

> Here we have been wrong; and in two ways:

*For one thing, there is, and there must be, a probative science—the principles of proof—independent of the artificial rules of procedure; hence, it can be and should be studied. This science, to be sure, may as yet be imperfectly formulated. But all the more need is there to begin in earnest to investigate and develop it. Furthermore, this process of Proof represents the objective in every judicial investigation. The procedural rules for Admissibility are merely a preliminary aid to the main activity, viz. the persuasion of the tribunal's mind to a correct conclusion by safe materials.*

Wigmore, 1937, pp. 3-4.

Wigmore thus sought to explicate principles upon which evidence-based inference appeared to be founded in the law. Although every case is unique, he identified recurring patterns in relationships among propositions to be proved (the facta probanda) and propositions that tend to support or refute them (the facta probans). "Basic concepts include conjunction; compound propositions; corroboration; convergence; and catenate inferences (inference upon inference) ... Each of these notions raises difficult questions about what is involved in determining the overall probative force or weight of evidence" (Twining, 1985, p. 182). To aid understanding of these relationships in particular cases, Wigmore developed a system for charting the structure of arguments. Symbols represent propositions, such as statements of physical evidence, witness testimony, generalizations, or implications of evidence or other propositions; lines among them represent inferential connections. Additional notation, not needed for our purposes, can be used to distinguish among propositions offered by the defense, the prosecution, and the judge, or to suggest the strength and direction of implication.

The *process* of constructing a Wigmore diagram forces careful thought about how evidence leads to inferences and how inferences inter-relate, through conjunction, catenation, and so on. This process may be at least as valuable as the product (Twining, 1985, p. 133). The *product*, or the diagram itself, serves to communicate this thinking to others, so that they may be persuaded, or moved to adduce missing themes, counter-explanations, or new lines of evidence to explore. Wigmore's approach can be applied in assessments in which open-ended performances are characterized in terms of established but generally-stated qualities. Just as an apparently simple guilty/not-guilty verdict can be determined by complex arguments from unique data in light of abstract legal principles, a seemingly straightforward numerical rating can involve "questions of what is of value, rather than simple correctness ... an episode in which students and teachers might learn,

through reflection and debate, about the standards of good work and the rules of evidence" (Wolf, Bixby, Glenn, & Gardner, 1991, p. 51).

Example 1: Advanced Placement Studio Art Portfolio Assessment. The purpose of the College Entrance Examination Board's Advanced Placement (AP) Studio Art portfolio assessment is to determine whether high school students exhibit knowledge and skills commensurate with first-year post-secondary art courses (Askin, 1985; Mitchell, 1992). Students develop works for their portfolios during the course of the year, through which they demonstrate the knowledge and skills described in the AP Studio Art materials. The portfolios are rated centrally by artist/educators at the end of the year, using standards set in general terms and monitored by the AP Art advisory committee. At a "standards setting session," the chief faculty consultant and table leaders select portfolios to exemplify the committee's standards. The full team of about 25 readers spends the equivalent of another day of the week-long scoring session examining, discussing, and practicing with these and other examples in order to establish a common framework of meaning. The assessment features ratings on three distinct sections of each portfolio, multiple ratings of all sections for all students, and virtually unbridled student choice in demonstrating their capabilities and creative problem-solving skills within guidelines set forth for the sections. Section B, the student's "concentration," consists of up to 20 slides, a film, or a videotape illustrating a concentration on a student-selected theme mentioned above and a paragraph or two describing the student's goals, intentions, influences, and other factors that help explain the series of works.

Figure 1 is a simplified Wigmore chart based on a discussion of Section B of an Advanced Placement Studio Art portfolio (Myford & Mislevy, in press). At the top of the diagram is the ultimate probandum, namely, that this submission should be assigned a rating of 3. Propositions that support or refute this proposition appear below it; propositions that in turn support or refute them appear further below, with the bottom-most propositions closest to the observed data. Several distinct themes appear in the chart. For example, the constellation near the center leading to Proposition #9 concerns the way the project (and the student) developed during the course of the work. The first pieces were weak—evidence which, in and of itself, would tend to move a reader toward a lower rating (#10). But later works, tackling more successfully the same challenge, build strongly from initial efforts (#12). In conjunction, these two propositions support #9, which posits notable progress over

time. The constellation at the right leading to #15 concerns evidence about the degree of technical skill exhibited in the work.

[[Figure 1]]

Figure 1 also illustrates several catenated or chained inferences, in which propositions play the role of probans, or supporting or refuting evidence, for some inference in the chain, but also play the role of probanda when other propositions are offered in turn to support or refute them. For example, Proposition #3 is evidence about #2, while #3 is itself evidenced by #4. Wigmore noted first that uncertainty accumulates in chained inferences. We would have some degree of uncertainty about the quality of ideation of this project (#2) even if we knew the student had "ingested some difficult art" (#3). We have even more uncertainty about #2 if we do not know #3 directly, but infer it from the references to Jaspar Johns and Lucas Samaras in his written statement (#4)—which may betoken name-dropping rather than knowledge. Wigmore noted secondly that to think through a chain from the bottom up (i.e., inductively), it is useful to consider at each step the weight of evidence offered by the factum probans if it were known to be true: "In dealing with the probative value of the circumstantial class, we are to take the alleged circumstantial ... fact as somehow believed, then determine its effect. It is immaterial whether it has itself to be proved..." (Wigmore, 1937, p. 17). We shall see that this advice is similar in spirit, though opposite in direction, to the way conditional probability structures are used in Pascalian probability-based reasoning with chained inferences. §

The direction of the arrows in a Wigmore diagram indicates a flow of inductive inference. Wigmore was concerned with the difficulty of combining a mass of disparate evidence for ultimate inferences, and he developed his charts to explicate the structure of evidence and inferences. However, he did not claim to prescribe rules for determining that outcome; that is, how to combine a mass of evidence into summary judgments, or to characterize its weight. He left it to the jurors to determine, in a Baconian sense, the extent to which a mass of evidence persuades them of the story of the case. As discussed below, mathematical probability does provide tools for combining evidence within a substantively-determined structure—provided that the crucial elements of the situation can be satisfactorily mapped into the probability framework. The usual problem in jurisprudence is that one would like to know "what really happened," but it is difficult to construct a parameter space comprised of "all the things that could have happened," upon which

evidence would induce numerical measures of relative likeliness among all possibilities (i.e., posterior probabilities).

## Mathematical Probability

When it is possible to map the salient elements of an inferential problem into the probability framework, powerful tools become available to combine explicitly the evidence that various probans convey about probanda, as to both weight and direction of probative force. Inferential subtleties such as catenation, missingness, disparateness of sources of evidence, and complexities of interrelationships among probans and probanda, can be resolved. A properly-structured statistical model embodies the salient qualitative patterns in the application at hand, and spells out, within that framework, the relationship between conjectures and evidence. It overlays a substantive model for the situation with a model for our knowledge of the situation, so that we may characterize and communicate what we come to believe—as to both content and conviction—and why we believe it—as to our assumptions, our conjectures, our evidence, and the structure of our reasoning.

Perhaps the two most important building blocks of mathematical probability are conditional independence and Bayes theorem. Conditional independence is a tool for mapping Greeno's (*op cit*) "generative principles of the domain" into the framework of mathematical probability, for erecting structures that express the substantive theory upon which deductive reasoning in a field is based.[1] This accomplished, Bayes theorem is a tool for reversing the flow of reasoning—inductively, from observations, through these same structures, to expressions of revised belief about conjectures cast in the more fundamental concepts of the domain, expressed in the language of mathematical probability.

## Conditional Independence

Two random variables $x$ and $y$ are *independent* if their joint probability distribution $p(x,y)$ is simply the product of their individual distributions— $p(x,y) = p(x)p(y)$. These variables are unrelated, in the sense that knowing the value of one provides no information about what the value of the other might be. Conditionally independent variables seem to be related— $p(x,y) \neq p(x)p(y)$ —but their co-occurrence can be understood as determined by the values of one or more other variables— $p(x,y|z) = p(x|z)p(y|z)$, where the conditional probability distribution $p(x|z)$ is the distribution of $x$, given the value $z$ of another variable. The conjunction of sneezing, watery eyes, and a runny nose described as a "histemic reaction" could be triggered by various causes such as an allergy or a cold; the specific

symptoms play the role of $x$'s and $y$'s, while the status of "having a histemic reaction" plays the role of $z$. The paradigms of a field supply "explanations" of phenomena in terms of concepts, variables, and putative conditional independence relationships. Judah Pearl (1988) argues that inventing intervening variables is not merely a technical convenience, but a natural element in human reasoning:

> *Conditional independence is not a grace of nature for which we must wait*
> *passively, but rather a psychological necessity which we satisfy actively by*
> *organizing our knowledge in a specific way. An important tool in such*
> *organization is the identification of intermediate variables that induce*
> *conditional independence among observables; if such variables are not in our*
> *vocabulary, we create them. In medical diagnosis, for instance, when some*
> *symptoms directly influence one another, the medical profession invents a*
> *name for that interaction (e.g., "syndrome," "complication," "pathological*
> *state") and treats it as a new auxiliary variable that induces conditional*
> *independence; dependency between any two interacting systems is fully*
> *attributed to the dependencies of each on the auxiliary variable.* (p. 44)

In psychology, Charles Spearman's *methodological* insight was that conditional independence of observable scores in standardized tests, given an unobservable "intelligence" variable $g$, would imply particular patterns of relationships among the observable scores (Spearman, 1904, 1927). Now while conditional independence is thus used to express Spearman's psychological concept of a trait that determines behavior across a broad array of situations, the mathematical concept of conditional independence *per se* in no way implies $g$ or anything like it. Indeed, Examples 4 and 5 below show how conditional independence is used to express psychological theories under which the interactions between persons' knowledge structures and the situations they encounter are central to understanding behavior. The point is that Spearman's inferential machinery, as distinct from his psychological theory, supplied a framework for reasoning deductively and inductively within his paradigm, and, at least in principle, for disconfirming conjectures about behavior in terms of hypothesized traits.

The tradition of statistical inference founded upon unobservable variables and induced conditional probability relationships now dominant in educational and psychological measurement thus extends back to Spearman's early work, bolstered by Wright's (1934) path analysis, Lazarsfeld's (1950) latent class models, and more recent

work on structural equations modeling in the presence of measurement errors (e.g., Jöreskog & Sörbom, 1979). Lewis (1986) notes continued and considerable extensions of the logic of inference for problems involving unobservable variables, exploring possibilities and limitations, developing statistical machinery for estimation and prediction (e.g., Rasch, 1960/1980; Holland & Rosenbaum, 1986). The first part of Example 2 (below) illustrates how deductive reasoning flows from the conditional probability relationship at the core of Rasch's (1960/1980) item response theory (IRT) model for dichotomous test items.

Example 2: An Item Response Theory Model. The Rasch model for dichotomous test items is used to structure inference about students' overall level of proficiency in a specified domain of test items. It posits that responses to $n$ test items from the domain are conditionally independent, given parameters characterizing a student's overall tendency to make correct responses (denoted $\theta$) and each item's difficulty ($\beta_j$ denoting the difficulty parameter for Item $j$):

$$P(x_1,\ldots,x_n \mid \theta,\beta_1,\ldots,\beta_n) = \prod_{j=1}^{n} P(x_j \mid \theta,\beta_j),$$

(1)

with

$$P(x_j \mid \theta,\beta_j) = \frac{\exp\left[x_j(\theta - \beta_j)\right]}{\left[1 + \exp(\theta - \beta_j)\right]},$$

(2)

where $x_j$ is the response to Item $j$ (1 for right, 0 for wrong). Figure 2 shows the probabilities of correct response to three items, with difficulty parameters -1, 0, and +1, as a function of $\theta$. Low values of $\theta$ indicate lower chances of correct response and high values indicate higher chances, at rates determined by the item parameters.

[Figure 2]

Figure 3 depicts the relationships expressed in (1) among the variables pertaining to a single student as a directed acyclic graph (DAG). Each node represents a variable—one proficiency variable, $\theta$, and three items, $x_1$, $x_2$, and $x_3$. An arrow between nodes represents a conditional probability relationship between variables, the direction signifying which variable is being conditioned on (from "parents" to "children," in DAG terminology from genetic applications). The lack of arrows

among the individual $x$'s represents the conditional independence indicated in (1); they are posited to be unrelated except through $\theta$. For any given $x_j$, the probability distribution is modeled as depending on $\theta$ and $\beta_j$ as indicated in (2). Equations (1) and (2) represent deductive inference from $\theta$ and $\beta$'s to expectations about $x$'s; that is, $\theta$ and $\beta$'s are probans, the $x$'s, probanda. Alternatively stated, if particular values of $\theta$ and $\beta$'s were given, we could use (1) and (2) to assign probabilities, or numerical statements of our expectations, to conjectures about observable responses such as "The response to Item 1 will be 0 rather than 1" or "All three responses will be correct as opposed to a pattern with at least one 0."

[Figure 3]

The arrows in Figure 3 indicate the structure of relationships, but not their strengths. Suppose for simplicity that $\theta$ can take only four values, -1.5, -.5, .5, and 1.5, and we know the $\beta$ values of the three items to be -1, 0, and 1 respectively. Table 1 gives the probabilities of correct response to each of the items conditional on each possible $\theta$ value, as calculated from (3). These relationships are depicted as augmented DAGs in the four panels of Figure 4. Each panel depicts the probabilities of right and wrong item responses if $\theta$ is known with certainty to take one of its four possible values. Bars in the nodes corresponding to items represent probabilities from Table 1 for right and wrong responses, given the $\theta$ values. The bar for the $\theta$ node goes all the way to 1 for the keyed $\theta$ value in each panel, thereby conditioning expectations for $x$'s that would follow (deductively) if it were the true value. §

[Figure 4]

[Table 1]

## Bayes Theorem

We must reason inductively in most practical applications. In the IRT example, we observe item responses $x$ in order to increase our knowledge about a student's level of proficiency on tasks in the domain. If we know or have good estimates of the $\beta$'s, then the $x$'s are now probans and $\theta$ the probandum. That is, given a particular pattern of item responses, we wish to express our belief about conjectures about $\theta$ such as "$\theta$=-1.5." Since we can map the possibilities into the probability framework in this case, Bayes theorem provides a mechanism for accomplishing the desired inductive inference.

In general terms, let $x$ be a variable whose probability distribution $p(x|z)$ depends on the variable $z$. Suppose also that prior to observing $x$, belief about the value of $z$ can be expressed in terms of a probability distribution $p(z)$ For example, we may consider all possible values of $z$ equally likely, or we may have an empirical distribution based on values observed in the past. Bayes Theorem says

$$p(z|x) = \frac{p(x|z)p(z)}{p(x)},$$

(3)

where $p(x)$ is the expected value of $x$ over all possible values of $z$, or

$$p(x) = E[p(x|z)] = \begin{cases} \int p(x|z)p(z)d(z) & z \text{ continuous} \\ \sum p(x|z)p(z) & z \text{ discrete} \end{cases},$$

(4)

with the integral or sum taken over the admissible range of $z$ (Box & Tiao, 1973, p. 10).

We see in (3) that the terms which change belief about a conjecture, from $p(z)$ to $p(z|x)$, are the so-called likelihoods, $p(x|z)$; that is, the relative probabilities of the observed datum given each of the possible states that might have produced it. While the expressions $p(x|z)$ drive *deductive* reasoning about possible $x$'s for a given $z$, the same expressions drive *inductive* reasoning about the likelihood of possible $z$'s once a particular value of $x$ is observed. If, for a particular value of $x$, $p(x|z_1)$ is twice $p(x|z_2)$, then observing this value of $x$ argues in and of itself twice as strongly for $z_1$ as for $z_2$, independently of our prior state of belief about their relative prospects and of evidence from other sources (this latter information to be taken into account in ways discussed below in connection with inference networks). From a Bayesian statistical perspective, likelihoods characterize completely the weight and direction of evidential value that observations bear for a conjecture.

This last point deserves emphasis, for it is the essence the characterization of belief and weight of evidence under the paradigm of mathematical probability:

- Prior to observing a datum, relative belief in a space of possible propositions is effected as a probability (density) distribution, namely, the prior distribution $p(z)$.

- Posterior to observing the datum $x$, relative belief in the same space is effected as another probability (density) distribution, the posterior distribution $p(z|x)$.

• The evidential value of the datum $x$ is conveyed by the multiplicative factor that revises the prior to the posterior for all possible values of $z$, namely, the likelihood function $p(x|z)$. One examines the *direction* by which beliefs associated with any given $z$ change in response to observing $x$ (is a particular value of $z$ now considered more probable or less probable than before?) and the *extent* to which they change (by a little or by a lot?).

Example 3: A Latent Class Model. "Achievement testing as we have defined it is a method of indexing stages of competence through indicators of the level of development of knowledge, skill, and cognitive process," submitted Glaser, Lesgold, and Lajoie (1987, p. 81); "These indicators display stages of performance that have been attained and on which further learning can proceed." The important questions for guiding learning are not "How many items did this student answer correctly?" or "What proportion of the population would have scores lower than his?" but, in Thompson's (1982) words, "What can this person be thinking so that his actions make sense from his perspective?" and "What organization does the student have in mind so that his actions seem, to him, to form a coherent pattern?" This example shows how a series of tasks devised by Robert Siegler (1981) and a latent class statistical model (Lazarsfeld, 1950) support probability-based inference about such aspects of children's proportional reasoning a viewed from the perspective of a neo-Piagetian paradigm (also see Kempf, 1983).

Jean Piaget proposed that children develop proportional reasoning in stages that reflect increasing awareness of the salient properties of a problem class, and increasing sophistication in how they combine to produce a solution (Inhelder & Piaget, 1958). Conjectures about children's proficiency under Piaget's developmental paradigm concern the stages of development at which they are functioning, and observable data consist of their words and actions as they solve proportional reasoning tasks. Siegler's tasks show varying numbers of weights placed at varying locations on a balance beam, and a child predicts whether the beam will tip to the left, tip to the right, or remain in balance. The six basic types of task are illustrated in Figure 5. Following Piaget, Siegler hypothesized that children could be classified into one of five stages: four characterized by how many of the cumulative reasoning rules shown in Table 2 they had acquired—representing Stages I through IV—and an earlier "pre-operational" Stage 0 in which neither weight nor

distance from the fulcrum are seen to bear any systematic relationship to the movement of the beam.

[[Figure 5]]

[[Table 2]]

If the underlying developmental theory were perfect, children's stages of reasoning would tightly control the rates at which they would respond correctly to the various types of tasks; these rates are shown as Table 3. But because the model is not perfect[2], and because children make slips and lucky guesses, any response could be observed from a child in any stage. A latent class model can be used to express the expectations of correctness of the various tasks at each of the stages, while allowing for some "noise" in real data (Mislevy, Yamamoto, & Anacker, 1992). Instead of positing that children in Stage II will with certainty respond incorrectly to "Conflict-Dominant" tasks, we might instead estimate the proportion of correct answers, or P(CD=correct | Stage=II). These probabilities play the same role as the item parameters $\beta$ in the IRT example, quantifying expectations of potential observations $x$ (in this case, predictions about which way the balance beam will move) given the unobservable psychological variable of interest $\theta$ (in this case, the child's stage of reasoning). Estimated values for proportions of correct response given reasoning stages appear in Table 4.

[[Tables 3 & 4]]

A child in Stage I usually predicts the side with more weight will go down, although different distances from the fulcrum may cause the other side to go down or the beam to remain in balance; it is necessary to compare torques to know. But in CD tasks the side with more weight actually does go down, and the Stage I child gets the right answer for the wrong reason! When a child's understanding deepens to the point at which he realizes distance matters but doesn't know how to combine it with weight, he is less likely to get CD tasks right than when he was in Stage I. Because probabilities of correct response to CD tasks do not increase monotonically with increasing total test scores, they provide weak evidence for the inferential problem IRT is meant to address, namely gauging overall tendency to make correct responses. From the perspective of the developmental theory, however, not only is this reversal expected, it provides useful evidence for distinguishing among children with different

ways of thinking about the domain. Succeeding with the more complex "Conflict-Dominant" (CD) tasks while missing the simpler "Subordinate" (S) tasks is converging evidence that a child is reasoning in Stage I. This pattern highlights the distinction between Wigmore's two terms, "corroborating evidence" and "converging evidence." Corroborating evidence refers to repeated, consonant observations of the same kind of data for the same conjecture: Consistently correct CD responses are corroborating evidence for inferring proficiency in the subdomain of CD tasks; consistently incorrect S responses are corroborating evidence for inferring proficiency in the subdomain of S tasks. Converging evidence refers to patterns of data of different kinds that are consistent with a conjecture: Correct CD responses together with incorrect S responses are converging evidence about membership in Stage I.

Though cast within a different psychological paradigm, the DAG for this model is similar in structure to that of the Rasch model: A single unobservable variable (stage of reasoning) is posited to determine probabilities of task outcomes (correct and incorrect predictions about the balance-beam movement). Suppose that our beliefs that a student is in each of the stages from 0 through IV before we observe a response to any task, corresponding to the values of $p(z)$ in the expression above for Bayes Theorem, are given by the Mislevy et al. estimates of proportions of children at each of the stages in Siegler's sample:

$$(P(\text{Stage} = 0), P(\text{Stage} = I), P(\text{Stage} = II), P(\text{Stage} = III), P(\text{Stage} = IV))$$

$$= (.257, .227, .163, .275, .078).$$

This state of knowledge is depicted in the first panel of Figure 6, showing for simplicity only the nodes for Stage Membership and one task of each type. Suppose now we observe a correct response to a S task. The values in the S column of Table 4 correspond to the values of $p(x|z)$ with $x$ being "correct response to a S item" and with $z$ taking the values of the five possible stage memberships. These values register the evidential value of a correct-S observation with respect to inference about a student's stage of understanding, shifting belief upwards in general, and away from Stage I and toward Stage III in particular. Updated beliefs about a student's stage membership, or values of $p(z|x)$ with $x$ and $z$ interpreted as above, are then obtained in two steps, through first (4) then (3) as follows:

$$P(x) \equiv P(\text{Correct response to S})$$

$$= \sum_{j=1}^{5} P(\text{Correct response to S|Stage} = j)P(\text{Stage} = j)$$

$$= (.333)(.257) + (.026)(.227) + (.883)(.163) + (.981)(.275) + (.943)(.078)$$

$$= .086 + .006 + .144 + .270 + .073 = .579.$$

$$(P(\text{Stage} = 0|\text{Correct response to S}), ..., P(\text{Stage} = IV|\text{Correct response to S}))$$

$$= (\frac{.086}{.579}, \frac{.006}{.579}, \frac{.144}{.579}, \frac{.270}{.579}, \frac{.073}{.579})$$

$$= (.149, .010, .249, .466, .126).$$

These revised beliefs, as well as updated expectations for possible future responses to other task types, appear in the second panel of Figure 6. §

[[Figure 6]]

The keys to successful exploitation of probability-based reasoning in a given application are the definitions of variables to capture the salient elements of the situation, and the structuring of probability distributions and conditional independences that capture the most important relationships among those elements. It may be painstaking and difficult work to model subtleties of the kinds mentioned above (see, for example, how Schum, 1981, sorted out intricacies of witness credibility), and it may be necessary to add additional layers of parameters to express uncertainty about relationships. Nevertheless, if the relationships necessary for deductive reasoning and prior beliefs about unknown parameters can be mapped into the framework of mathematical probability, then Bayes Theorem can provide principled inductive reasoning that accounts for the subtleties within the same framework.

## Bayesian Inference Networks

Applying Bayes theorem in its textbook form (Equations 3 and 4) becomes unwieldy rather quickly as the number of variables in a problem increases. Efficient probability-based inference in complex networks of interdependent variables is an active topic in statistical research, spurred by applications in such diverse areas as forecasting, pedigree analysis, troubleshooting, and medical diagnosis (e.g., Lauritzen & Spiegelhalter, 1988; Pearl, 1988). Interest centers on obtaining the distributions of selected variables conditional on observed values of other variables, such as likely characteristics of offspring

of selected animals given characteristics of their ancestors, or probabilities of disease states given symptoms and test results. The conditional independence relationships suggested by substantive theory play a central role in the topology of the network of interrelationships in a system of variables. If the topology is favorable, such calculations can be carried out efficiently through extended application of Bayes theorem even in very large systems, by means of strictly local operations on small subsets of interrelated variables ("cliques") and their intersections. Discussions of construction and local computation in Bayesian inference networks can be found in the statistical and expert-systems literature (see, for example, Lauritzen & Spiegelhalter, 1988, Pearl, 1988, and Shafer & Shenoy, 1988; computer programs that carry out the required computations include Andersen, Jensen, Olesen, & Jensen, 1989, and Noetic Systems, 1991).

A *recursive representation* of the joint distribution of a set of random variables $x_1,...,x_N$ takes the form

$$p(x_1,...,x_n) = p(x_n|x_{n-1},...,x_1)p(x_{n-1}|x_{n-2},...,x_1)\cdots p(x_2|x_1)p(x_1)$$

$$= \prod_{j=1}^{n} p(x_j|x_{j-1},...,x_1), \tag{5}$$

where the term for j=1 is defined as simply $p(x_1)$. A recursive representation can be written for any ordering of the variables, but one that exploits conditional independence relationships is more useful because variables drop out of the conditioning lists. This is equivalent to omitting arrows ("edges") from the DAG, thus simplifying the topology of the network. It is here that substantive theory comes into play, in (i) defining unobservable variables that characterize students' state or structure of understanding, and observable variables that will convey evidence about that understanding, and (ii) defining intervening variables and conditional independences through which deductive reasoning flows, so as to capture important substantive relationships and simplify computations. An inference network for medical diagnosis, for example, includes nodes for symptoms and test results, which are observable, and for syndrome and disease states, which are not observable, but in terms of which theories of the progression and treatment of disease are framed (Andreassen, Jensen, & Olesen, 1990). Analogously, an inference network for cognitive diagnosis includes nodes for students' actions and explanations and conditions of assessment situations, which are observable, and for skill and knowledge states, which are not, but in terms of which theories of knowledge and learning are framed (Mislevy, in press; Martin & VanLehn, 1993).

Example 2: An IRT Model, continued. This section extends the IRT example to sequential gathering and evaluating of evidence, or adaptive testing (Wainer *et al.*, 1990), and uncertainty about item parameter values—still with examinees' overall proficiency the target of inference. Suppose that prior belief about an examinee's $\theta$, before seeing any item responses, is characterized by equal probabilities of .25 for each of the four possible values posited above. (Alternatively, prior beliefs might be based on his results from earlier tests, empirical distributions of other examinees who have been tested, or on knowledge of his instructional history.) Assuming the probabilities of correct response given in Table 4 conditional on each possible $\theta$, we can deduce probabilities that represent our expectations of seeing correct responses from a student about whom we have no additional information. These are depicted in the first panel of Figure 7. If we now observe a correct response to Item 1, we can apply Bayes theorem to update our beliefs about this examinee's $\theta$, as shown in the second panel. But once our belief about $\theta$ is revised through inductive reasoning from $x_1$, we reason deductively to update our expectations for Items 2 and 3. The second panel of Figure 7 thus shows (i) certain knowledge about the response to Item 1, (ii) a shift of belief about $\theta$ to higher values, and (iii) greater expectations of correct response to the items not yet presented. The third panel shows the results of another cycle of inductive reasoning (from observing $x_2$ to belief about $\theta$) followed by deductive reasoning (from revised belief about $\theta$ to revised expectations about $x_3$), that are initiated by an incorrect response to Item 2.

[Figure 7]

Figures 4 and 7 treat as known the conditional probabilities for $x$'s given $\theta$ implied by item parameters $\beta$ and the prior distribution $p(\theta)$; only uncertainty concerning an individual students $\theta$ and $x$'s is addressed. This may be reasonable when strong evidence is available about these quantities, but in principle they too are never known with certainty. We learn something about them inductively from responses of several students to several items. A more complete Bayesian treatment of the IRT setup includes unknown parameters $\tau$ for the distribution of $\theta$, parameters $\xi$ for the distribution of $\beta$'s, and hyperparameters $\eta$ and $\zeta$ for the distributions of $\tau$ and $\xi$ (Mislevy, 1986; this setup can be further extended to incorporate information from collateral information about students, as in Mislevy & Sheehan, 1989, and collateral information about tasks, as in Mislevy, Sheehan, & Wingersky, 1993). As a particular instance of (5), we might thus posit

$$p(x,\theta,\beta,\xi,\tau,\eta,\zeta) = p(x|\theta,\beta)p(\theta|\tau)p(\tau|\eta)p(\eta)p(\beta|\xi)p(\xi|\zeta)p(\zeta),$$

and, after observing only response vectors $x$ from a collection of students to a collection of tasks, calculate approximate posterior distributions for any item or population parameters of interest, or for task or individual student parameters taking uncertainty about higher-level parameters into account. A portion of a corresponding extended DAG appears as Figure 8. §

[Figure 8]

Example 4: Mixed-Number Subtraction. The data in this example are again familiar right/wrong responses to open-ended mixed-number subtraction problems, but inference now concerns a more complex student model meant to support short-term instructional guidance. We see how conditional independence relationships can structure and support inference for a psychological model under which the difficulty of an item depends on the strategy a student employs—a source of uncertainty for inferences about overall proficiency, but a source of evidence for inferences about strategy usage. We further see how the interrelationships among skills and between skills and observable responses exemplify some of Wigmore's basic evidential structures, and how they are handled in the framework of mathematical probability. The data and the cognitive model are due to Tatsuoka (1987, 1990). The 530 middle-school students she studied characteristically solved mixed number subtraction problems using one of two strategies:

Method A:  Convert mixed numbers to improper fractions, subtract, then reduce if necessary.

Method B:  Separate mixed numbers into whole number and fractional parts, subtract as two subproblems, borrowing one from minuend whole number if necessary, then reduce if necessary.

Mislevy (in press) characterizes 15 items in terms of which of seven subprocedures are required to solve it with Method A and with Method B. The corresponding student model consists of a variable for which strategy a student characteristically uses, and which of the seven subprocedures the student is able to apply. The structure connecting the observable responses to the unobservable student-model parameters is that ideally, a student using, say, Method A would

correctly answer items which under that strategy require only subprocedures the student has at his disposal (Falmagne, 1989; Tatsuoka, 1990; Haertel & Wiley, 1993). But sometimes students miss items even under these conditions (false negatives), and sometimes they answer items correctly when they don't possess the requisite subprocedures by other, possibly faulty, strategies (false positives).

Figure 9 depicts an inference network for Method B only. Five nodes represent basic subprocedures that a student who uses Method B needs to solve various kinds of items; these are labeled Skill 1 through Skill 5. Conjunction, one of the basic evidential structures described by Wigmore, appears in this DAG: The conjunctive node "Skills1&2," for example, takes the value "yes" if and only if a student has both Skill 1 and Skill 2. Each node for the observable response to a particular subtraction item is the child of a node representing the minimal conjunction of skills needed to solve it with Method B. The relationship between such a node and an item incorporates false positive and false negative probabilities. Catenation, another of Wigmore's basic structures, appears in chains such as the one from "Skill 2" to "Skills1&2" to "Item 12." Inference in this chain is structured through the conditional probability distributions of Item 12 responses given each possible value of "Skills1&2" as if it were true, and the conditional probability distribution of "Skill1&2" values given each possible combination of the values of its parents, "Skill1" and "Skill2" if it were true. The numerical values of all the conditional probability relationships for the examples in this presentation were approximated with results from Tatsuoka's (1983) "rule space" analysis of the data, using only students classified as Method B users.[3]

[Figure 9]

Figure 10 depicts base rate probabilities of skill possession and item percents-correct, or the state of knowledge one would have about a student known to use Method B, before observing any item responses. Suppose we observe a pattern of responses that has mostly correct answers to items that don't require Skill 2, but incorrect answers to most of those that do. This is a body of disparate evidence: Right and wrong answers to items involving different skills in different combinations. Its evidential value is discerned through the relationships whose structure is depicted in the DAG and whose strengths and directions are expressed in the accompanying conditional probability distributions. (The network could be

extended to accommodate evidence from even more disparate sources, such as teachers' observations or explanations of solutions, if conditional probabilities of their outcomes given potential values of the skill nodes could be assessed. The extended network might require variables to model the effects of important influences on the new observables, above and beyond the skill variables.) Assuming the veracity of this structure, Figure 11 shows how beliefs change after observing such a response pattern. In particular, the updated probabilities for the five skills required for various items under Method B show substantial shifts away from the base-rate, toward the belief that the student commands Skills 1, 3, 4, and possibly 5, but almost certainly not Skill 2.

[Figures 10 & 11]

Figure 12 incorporates the Method B network and a similar network for Method A into a single network that is appropriate if we don't know which strategy a student uses. The evidential structure is a disjunction, not one of Wigmore's basic structures but as common in educational assessment as in everyday life: There are multiple routes to an outcome, and observing the outcome alone does not indicate the route. Each item-response node now has three parents: minimally sufficient sets of subprocedures under Method A and under Method B, and the new node "Is the student using Method A or Method B?" By virtue of their demands, two items can have the same minimal sufficient set of skills under one method but different minimal sets under the other. Their responses are conditionally independent *only* given status on these minimally sufficient skill sets and the method with which they are attempted. We find that an item like $7\frac{2}{3} - 5\frac{1}{3}$ is hard under Method A but easy under Method B; an item like $2\frac{1}{3} - 1\frac{2}{3}$ is just the opposite. A response vector with most of the first kind of items right and the second kind wrong shifts belief toward Method B. The opposite pattern shifts belief toward the use of Method A. These are patterns in data that constitute noise, in the form of conflicting evidence, in an overall proficiency model, yet which constitute evidence, in the form of converging evidence, about strategy usage under the combined network—a conjecture that cannot even be framed within the overall proficiency model.

[Figure 12 about here]

With the present student model, one might explore additional sources of evidence about strategy use: monitoring response times, tracing solution steps, or simply asking the students to describe their solutions. Each has tradeoffs in terms of cost and evidential value. The student model could be extended by allowing for strategy switching (Kyllonen, Lohman, & Snow, 1984); that is, deciding whether to use Method A or Method B on an item only after gauging which strategy would be easier to apply. The variables in this more complex student model would express the tendencies of a student to employ different strategies under various conditions, with "always use Method A" and "always use Method B" as extreme cases. §

## The Role of Conditionality

When the target inference is defined in terms of general behavioral tendencies over a specified domain of task situations, modeling responses as if conditionally independent given "average proficiency" as in Example 2 can be a useful expedient for characterizing the evidential value of observations. The evidence a task provides is posited to have the same character for all students, expressed through probabilities of potential responses $x$ given $\theta$. Obviously, however, any particular task might be relatively easy compared with other tasks for some students but relatively hard for other students, due, perhaps, to the different books they have read, courses they have taken, or experiences through which they have developed their proficiencies. Such interactions are a source of uncertainty with respect to inference about overall proficiency defined in this manner, and more extensive interactions further *degrade* the tasks' weight of evidence about overall proficiency. This is appropriately signaled in classical test theory by lower reliability coefficients and in IRT by lower slope parameters. From a constructivist perspective, these interactions are fully expected, since knowledge typically develops first in context, then is extended and decontextualized so that it can be applied across a broader range of contexts. This point of view can suggest a different student-model variable, a different target inference, and additional conceptual relationships to support that inference—a situation in which more extensive interactions can *enhance* the weight of evidence from task responses, to the extent that the differential patterns are expected outcomes of distinctions in a more variegated student model space.

Example 5: Assessing Proficiency in a Foreign Language. The mileposts described in the American Council of Teachers of Foreign Languages Reading guidelines (ACTFL, 1989), excerpts of which appear in Table 5, are founded on

empirical evidence and theories about the development of competence in acquiring information from text in a foreign language. Note the contrast between Intermediate readers' competence with texts "about which the reader has personal interest or knowledge" with Advanced readers' comprehension of "texts which treat unfamiliar topics and situation"—a distinction fundamental to the underlying conception of developing language proficiency. If we wish to assess students' proficiency in a foreign language, we encounter a fork in the road. Suppose, on one hand, the target of inference is overall proficiency with respect to a domain of tasks. We can predefine successful behavior on each task in the same way for all students regardless of their familiarity, administer a sample of tasks to a student, and thereby obtain direct evidence about expected behavior in the domain. Suppose, on the other hand, the target of inference is level of accomplishment with respect to the ACTFL Guidelines. If we know that the context of a given situation is familiar to one student but unfamiliar to a second, the same observed behavior from the two students holds radically different evidential import about their ACTFL levels. This example shows in a simple case how the machinery of probability-based inference can be applied when auxiliary information conditions the evidential value of students' performances.

[[Table 5]]

Contextual dependencies between situations and individuals can be incorporated into a Bayesian inference network by extending the structure beyond nodes that characterize the situation only from an "objective" point of view that pertains equally to all students. Nodes are introduced that vary across students in accordance with their points of view—for example, whether a student is familiar with the topic upon which a reading passage is based—and are modeled are additional parents of observable responses. Consider the following situation:

- The single student-model variable $\theta$ has four ACTFL levels, Novice, Intermediate, Advanced, and Superior.

- The observed variable $x$, a response to a passage based on a particular book, is rated in a five-category scale of quality, with levels denoted I, II, ..., V.

- The student is characterized as either familiar or unfamiliar with the book in question, indicated by the auxiliary student/context familiarity variable $y$.

Figure 13 illustrates expectations about $x$ as a function of given values of $\theta$ and $y$, or the flow of deductive reasoning. Note the different expectations when the student is and is not familiar with the context. Even students in the Superior category rarely perform well when the context is not familiar to them. When the student's level of familiarity is not known to an observer, the observer's expectations are a mixture of the two familiarity-known conditions, and are consequently much more diffuse. (The mixture is weighted by the proportion of students in each category who are and are not familiar with the context; this illustration uses a 50-50 split.) Figure 14 shows the results of inductive reasoning from observing a low, medium, or high performance, under the conditions of (1) knowing the student is familiar with the context, (2) knowing the student is *not* familiar, and (3) *not knowing* whether the student is familiar. The task conveys much more evidence about reading competence when we know the student is familiar with the context, and very little when she is not. This kind of difference gains importance as tasks demand more time from students. The in-depth project that provides solid assessment information and a meaningful learning experience for the students whose prior knowledge structures it dovetails, becomes an unconscionable waste of time for students for whom it has no connection.

[[Figures 13 & 14]]

If tasks provide so much more information when we know that the student is familiar with the context, why don't we always determine familiarity? The answer depends on the purpose of assessing and the cost of information to the assessor. Assessing a class of 30 fourth-grade students, a teacher can administer tasks related to what students have been studying and allow students to choose topics for projects. The teacher can generally arrange to observe data that can be interpreted under "familiarity=yes" conditions. A national testing program constrained to present the same tasks to 30,000 fourth-grade students generally cannot. Unlike a student's teacher, a distant observer lacks immediate and detailed information about contextual and situational student-by-task interactions.

Some large-scale surveys gather "opportunity to learn" (OTL) information from teachers or students themselves in an attempt to shift inference from the default "familiarity=unknown" condition to either the "=yes" or "=no" condition (Platt, 1975). The good news is that OTL improves estimates of population-level

relationships among schooling variables and attainment. The bad news is that OTL measures are not sufficiently dependable to be treated as "known with certainty" for individual students. Correlations between students' reports on background variables and independently verified values range from very low (~.2) to very high (~.9) (Koretz, 1992).

Figure 15 illustrates some consequences of uncertainty about auxiliary variables. Suppose that we did not ascertain familiarity directly, but obtained only a student's report. Suppose further that students who were truly unfamiliar with a context always reported they were unfamiliar, but 15-percent of the students who were truly familiar reported they were unfamiliar. The top two DAGs in Figure 15 repeat the inferences that follow if we know a student *is* familiar or *is not* familiar with the context. If a student is truly familiar, incorrectly reports he is unfamiliar, and we accept the report as a certain truth, then we mistakenly reason as shown in the top right DAG rather than the appropriate top left one. We would substantially overestimate his proficiency. The lower DAG adds a new node for the report. Its parent is true familiarity, and the conditional probability distribution when "familiarity=yes" is .85 for "report=yes" and .15 for "report=no." Conditioning on what we actually observe ("Report=yes" and "Task=III") accounts for this degree of uncertainty about true familiarity, and moderates the influence of the familiarity to a 87/13 mixture of "=no" and "=yes" familiarity-known conditions.[4] The result is an attenuated belief about proficiency that correctly reflects the average proficiency distribution among students with scores of III who report they are unfamiliar with the context. However, this distribution tends to understate slightly the proficiencies of those who are truly unfamiliar and still overstates substantially the proficiency of students who are familiar but report they are not. Depending on unsubstantiated reports in this manner would invite abuse in high-stakes "test as contest" applications; a student would raise his score by always claiming unfamiliarity whether it were true or not, even if the possibility of incorrect reports were accounted for on the average.

Tradeoffs between the potential value of evidence and the difficulties in ascertaining its credibility arise similarly in jurisprudence. American rules of evidence strictly limit hearsay testimony, or witnesses' claims about what a third party said. If that person isn't present, we can't be sure he made the statement in question; even if he did, we can't examine his demeanor when he says it, or cross-examine his motives and meanings. Although hearsay testimony can provide

important information, it is generally excluded because it can also provide misinformation, be it guileless or self-serving, with little means for jurors to assess its credibility. In contrast, Swedish courts have far fewer exclusionary rules of evidence and generally do admit hearsay evidence.[5] The side entering hearsay must be prepared in turn support its credibility, however, through evidence and argumentation in further layers of catenation, to counter the doubts and counter-explanations the opposition advances. One must weigh the probative value of hearsay testimony against its requirements for support before deciding to use it. §

[Figure 15]

## Abductive Reasoning and Mathematical Probability

*There are perfectly satisfactory answers to all your questions. ... But I don't think you understand how little you would learn from them. ... Your questions are much more revealing about yourself than my answers would be about me.*

*The Passenger*; Peploe, Wollen, & Antonioni, 1975.

A Bayesian inference network builds around theory-driven, deductive-reasoning structures—likely values of data given states of ultimate interest—in order to support subsequent inductive reasoning from realized data to probabilities of states. Yet abductive reasoning, apparently missing from the loop, is vital in two ways. First, just as a detective's and prosecutor's abductive reasoning provides the framework for the jury's inductive reasoning, insightful use of substantive theory is essential to construct the network. Secondly, while the network is a tool for reasoning deductively and inductively *within* the posited structure, abduction is required again to reason *about* the structure—to criticize and improve the structure, in response to mismatches between modeled and realized patterns. In the framework of mathematical probability, statistical diagnostic tools can highlight such anomalies as unexpected observations, departures from modeled conditional independences, and failures to capture salient features of data (Rubin, 1984). When we can model expected patterns with sufficient accuracy to be surprised when they don't occur, we open the door to learning; perhaps leading us to improve the way we collect data or to refine our statistical model, or, more profoundly, triggering a reconstruction of our conceptual model of the situation:

*To the extent that measurement and quantitative technique play an especially significant role in scientific discovery, they do so precisely because, by displaying serious anomaly, they tell scientists when and where to look for new qualitative phenomenon. To the nature of that phenomenon, they usually provide no clues.*

Kuhn, 1970, p. 205.

Inferring posterior distributions of parameters or predictive distributions of future observations within the framework of a model is analogous to a jury's guilty/not-guilty deliberation with respect to the prosecutor's story of the case. The establishment of a framework within which reasoning will take place facilitates communication, making explicit and public the structure of the argument and its grounding in evidence, and it secures credibility by separating the data-gathering and decision-making functions—but at the cost of narrowing the channel of what is communicated. Errors arise when the true state of affairs cannot be adequately approximated within the proffered framework. It is important to remember that the numerical probabilities that result from the use of Bayes Theorem (and all the more when embedded in a complex network) depend on the posited structure. Only possibilities built into the model can end up with positive probabilities! Apparently precise numerical statements of belief prove misleading or downright embarrassing when it is later determined that the true state of affairs could not even be approximated in the analytic model.[6]

Two strategies from the mathematical-probability toolkit help address this problem in practice in educational assessment. One approach is to augment theoretically-expected unobservable states with one or more "catch-all" states to which increase in probability when unexpected patterns arise in observable data. Yamamoto's (1987) HYBRID model for item response data includes not only latent classes (such as those described in the Example 3 above for proportional reasoning) that are associated with distinctive response patterns, but a catch-all class (the "IRT class") that merely characterizes examinees in terms of their overall tendency to answer items correctly. When response patterns occur that are unlike any of the patterns associated with the latent classes, the posterior probability for the catch-all class dominates; in this way, the model can express the fact that evidence may not support membership in *any* of the classes suggested by the associated substantive theory.[7] A second approach is to calculate indices of model misfit (in IRT, for example, Levine & Drasgow, 1982). While carrying out inference within a given probabilistic structure to update beliefs, indices are calculated to indicate how usual or unusual the observed data are

under that structure: If higher-level parameters took their most likely values in accordance with the observed datum, how likely would this datum be? Surprising observations are flagged, for it is here that actual circumstances may differ most severely from modeled circumstances.

Example 1: AP Studio Art Portfolios, continued. A project can stimulate the kind of constructed learning or creative problem-solving thinking we wish to promote, yet fail nevertheless as an assessment tool unless we can abstract from the performance the critical evidence for the targeted inferences. It is necessary to establish a common framework of meaning among students and readers—shared standards for recognizing what is valued in performance and how it maps into the evaluative structure (Wolf, Bixby, Glenn, & Gardner, 1991). To this end, Carol Myford and I (Myford & Mislevy, in press) have been studying the AP portfolio rating process from what might be called a "naturalistic" perspective and a "statistical" perspective. These two components of the project concern, respectively, the Baconian reasoning readers employ to assign ratings to portfolio sections, and Pascalian reasoning analyzing patterns among those ratings in a mathematical-probability framework—a partitioning in some ways analogous to that between the detective's realm and the jury's.

In the "naturalistic" component, we identified 18 portfolios in the 1992 reading with a section that had received highly discrepant ratings from two readers. Currently, such occurrences are identified and rectified by a final rating from the chief faculty consultant; our motivation for discussing work that evoked discrepant ratings will become clear below. We discussed each sections with two experienced readers to gain insights into the judging process in general, and into the features that made rating these particular portfolios difficult. The Wigmore chart shown above as Figure 1 above is based on one of these conversations. It would help this particular student understand why his Section B submission received the rating it did, and it would help other students, teachers, and new readers understand the kinds of evidence, inference, arguments, and standards that underlie ratings more generally. However, more than 50,000 individual ratings were produced in the reading, and it is simply impossible to hold such discussions, let alone produce Wigmore charts, for each of them. A summary result for each, in the form of a numerical rating, provides the data for the complementary statistical perspective.

In the "statistical" component of the project, we used Linacre's (1989) FACETS model, a main-effects model for the log-odds of adjacent rating categories, to analyze patterns in the more than. While IRT was invented to model regularities in examinees' overt behavior in common contexts considered invariant over people, FACETS uses similar mathematical structures to model regularities in readers' application of common standards to possibly quite different forms of evidence in different contexts from diffierent students. How the student whose concentration was "angularity in ceramics" would fare in a domain defined by all possible concentration topics *is not* an inference of interest; the consistency with which different readers would map her particular accomplishments in "angularity in ceramics" into the common evaluative framework *is*. The data for each student were 13 scores on 0-to-4 scales, 3 from different readers on Section A (Quality), 2 from other readers on Section B (Concentration), and a total of 8 from each of two other readers on the four subsections of Section C (Breadth). The probability of a rating in category $k$ on Scale $h$ for a student with parameter $\theta$ from Reader $j$ is modeled as

$$P_{h,j,k}(\theta) = \frac{\exp\left[k\left(\theta - \xi_j + \eta_h\right) + \sum_{s=1}^{k} \tau_{sh}\right]}{1 + \sum_{t=1}^{K}\exp\left[t\left(\theta - \xi_j + \eta_h\right) + \sum_{s=1}^{t} \tau_{sh}\right]}. \tag{6}$$

The numerator is understood to be 1 for Rating Category 0; $\theta$ is a parameter for the portfolio, indicating a tendency over readers and sections to receive high or low ratings; $\xi_j$ is the "harshness" parameter associated with Reader j; $\eta_h$ is an "easiness" parameter for Section $h$; and $\tau_{kh}$, for $k=1,...,K$, is a parameter indicating the relative probability of a rating in Category $k$ as opposed to Category $k$-1 for the scale of Section $h$. Figure 16 graphs probabilities of response in each category of a 0-4 performance task as a function of $\theta$. Figure 17 is a simplified version of the DAG for inference under this model.

[[Figures 16 and 17]]

The posterior distribution of the portfolio parameter, $\theta$, summarizes the weight and direction of evidence provided by the 15 elemental ratings. Main effects of readers as to harshness or leniency are taken into account through $\xi_j$ 's, as are the average difficulties of the sections through $\eta_h$'s. Figure 18 shows pairs of draws from the posterior distributions of the $\theta$'s of the 1992 portfolios, the spread away

from the diagonal indicating the degree of uncertainty associated with the current configuration of readings. It is also possible to project through the model what the posterior precision of a portfolio parameter would be under different configurations of readings; say, one rating per section from different readers, two ratings for Sections A and B from the same two readers and two for Section C from two different readers, and so on (as in Cronbach, Gleser, Nanda, & Rajaratnam, 1972). This "pre-posterior" analysis is a tool for allocating a scarce resource (the expert readers' time) efficiently, as is done in adaptive testing with IRT.

[[Figure 18]]

While systematic reader effects can be taken into account, readers-by-portfolio interactions cannot be when, as in AP Studio Art, a reader rates a section only once; they therefore contribute uncertainty to the composite score. To what degree are these interactions caused by fatigue, by ambiguous directions to students or readers, by strongly idiosyncratic points of view, or different ways of integrating disparate aspects of accomplishment in the works within portfolio sections? Patterns of variation can be detected and quantified by statistical analyses, but the numbers cannot in and of themselves tell us how to improve reader training, sharpen the definition of standards, or distinguish aspects of accomplishment that should be rated separately. Since no one individual can become intimately familiar with all 50,000 rating processes, FACETS highlights particular reader/portfolio combinations that are especially unusual in light of the main effects, to help focus attention where it is most needed.

Statistical identification of outliers tells us where to look, but not what to look for. These cases are unusual precisely because the causes of variation we already understand do not explain them. Further insight requires information outside the statistical framework, to seek new hypotheses for previously unrecognized factors. When a discrepancy arises, how would Wigmore charts summarizing the abductive reasoning of two readers differ? Would one show themes the other missed, due perhaps to specialized knowledge about the glazes the student used? Or would similar themes appear, but with conflicting aspects integrated in accordance with differing priorities? Such analyses, as occurred informally in our discussions, can reveal opportunities to improve the evaluation system. Several avenues for possible exploration emerged in our project, including the development of verbal rubrics,

particularly as a learning tool for new readers; having students write statements for the color and design sections, as for concentrations, to help readers understand the self-defined challenges the students were attacking; and refining directives and providing additional examples for Section B to clarify to both students and readers the interplay between the written and productive aspects of a concentration.

By working back and forth between statistical and naturalistic analyses, a common framework of meaning can be established, monitored, and refined over time. Readers' abductive reasoning from an open universe of possible student work leads to numerical ratings, through processes that can be made public through discussions, publications, or Wigmore charts concerning a range of representative examples. Once ratings have been obtained, statistical analysis can characterize evidence for inductive reasoning about typical cases within the system, and help identify atypical cases to trigger further abductive reasoning about the system itself. Mathematical tools originally developed under the mental measurement paradigm can thus be adapted to support inference in an assessment cast under a constructivist paradigm. By making public the materials and results of such a process, one communicate the meaning and value of the work such assessments engender, and of the quality of the processes by which evidence about students' competence is inferred. §

## Conclusion

1. *There is a close relation between the Science [of inference] and the Trial Rules [i.e., rules of evidence] - analogous to the relation between the scientific principles of nutrition and digestion and the rules of diet as empirically discovered and practiced by intelligent families.*

2. *The Trial Rules are, in a broad sense, founded upon the Science; but that the practical conditions of trials bring into play certain limiting considerations not found in the laboratory pursuit of the Science, and therefore the Rules do not and cannot always coincide with the principles of the Science.*

3. *That for this reason the principles of the Science, as a whole, cannot be expected to replace the Trial Rules; the Rules having their own right to exist independently.*

*4. But that, for the same reason, the principles of the Science may at
certain points confirm the wisdom of the Trial Rules, and may at other
points demonstrate the unwisdom of the Rules.*

Wigmore, 1937, p. 925.

Wigmore concluded that there are indeed general principles to guide and analyze evidentiary reasoning, but they alone are insufficient for the full range of issues of evidence and inference that arise in jurisprudence. To begin with, questions of what constitutes evidence cannot even be framed without conceptions of the nature of people and the nature of justice. Within a conceptual framework, determining whether and how to gather, admit, and evaluate data must weigh its evidential value against such considerations as the following: its tendencies to mislead jurors (e.g., hearsay testimony); costs of obtaining and supporting it (as this is written, genetic testing is potentially valuable, but often contentious and certainly expensive); and its feedback effects on the system (the Fifth Amendment protections against self-incrimination forgo highly relevant data, in order to discourage coerced confessions). Every general rule of evidence and every specific procedural decision must take such factors into account, but it should not, Wigmore argued, take them alone into account. Our chances of devising legal structures that strike appropriate balances among costs, rights, and correctness must surely increase as we more fully understand the implications of the tradeoffs we face. This includes, particularly and importantly, improving our understanding of the relationships between evidence and inference.

Educational assessment likewise takes place in social, political, theoretical, and personal contexts. Who collects and uses assessment data, for what purpose, at what costs, under what conception of competence, and with what feedback effects on curriculum and instruction? All of these issues impact assessment forms and practices—necessarily so, properly so. Yet assessment forms and practices, like rules of evidence, impact just as surely the weight and coverage of evidence that assessment data convey for the inferences and decisions they are meant to support. Apprehending the evidential value of assessment data requires (1) defining what we wish to accomplish, or our purposes for assessing; (2) specifying what we need to find out about students to achieve our purposes; and (3) constructing a principled framework in which we can evaluate and improve our efforts. As a general framework for reasoning in the presence of uncertainty, the paradigm of mathematical probability provides tools and concepts to further this end.

# Notes

[1] Conditional independence also plays a key role in justifying the use of mathematical probability-based reasoning for real-world problems. The layman unfamiliar with probability and statistics, other than through informal notions about random sampling and large samples, might question whether mathematical probability has anything to do with real-world observations that are governed by disparate mechanisms and may be linked with one another in unknown ways (e.g., prospective test scores of students about whom we know nothing other than that each surely brings a unique personality and history to the tasks, aspects of which are similar to certain other students in some ways but not in other ways). Even if we admit the possibility, indeed the inevitability, of such differences among the antecedents of potential observations, yet at a given point in time have no information to distinguish among them a priori, then these observations are "exchangeable" from our point of view. That is, our subjective probability distribution for their scores would be the same under any permutation of the variables. Even if the mechanism by which values are produced is nothing like random, de Finetti's Theorem (de Finetti, 1974) says the distribution of finite subsets of an infinite sequence of exchangeable variables can be expressed as the expectation, over a mixing distribution, of conditionally independent and identically distributed (iid) variables. Diaconis and Freedman (1980) show further that conditionally iid representations can be used to approximate subsets of finite sets of exchangeable variables, with increasing fidelity for larger sets. Thus, the use of mathematical probability need not be justified by the manner in which values of variables arise, but by our state of knowledge about them. Of course if we learn more about influences and mechanisms that produce values of variables, we can improve our model of the situation. Variables that were exchangeable in light of previous knowledge need not be later. The interested is referred to Lindley and Novick (1981) for an exploration of the role of exchangeability vis a vis random sampling and populations in connection with inference in experimental and non-experimental settings.

[2] This model assumes that the five exhaustive and mutually exclusive states. Alternative models could be used to relax these restrictions. The section on abductive reasoning discusses the role of detecting unexpected response patterns for tempering inference in specific cases, and for gaining insights on how to refine or revise a provisional model.

3 Duanli Yan and I have also estimated conditional probabilities in this network with the EM algorithm, and are currently working on Gibbs sampling characterizations of such networks.

4 The relevant probabilities, now interpreted as the likelihood function, are p(report=no|familiarity=no)=1.00 and p(report=no|familiarity=yes)=.15, a ratio of 87/13 favoring familiarity=no.

5 The Swedish system is closer to Bentham's ideal of "free proof" proceedings. "To find infallible rules for evidence, rules which insure a just decision is, from the nature of things, absolutely impossible; but the human mind is too apt to establish rules which only increase the probabilities of a bad decision. All the service that an impartial investigator of the truth can perform in this respect is, to put legislators and judges on their guard against such hasty rules" (Bentham, 1825, p. 180).

6 The House Select Committee on Assassinations assigned a 95% probability to the proposition that four shots were fired in the John Kennedy assassination, based on a dictabelt recording of sounds believed to have been recorded from a microphone on a police motorcycle in Dealy Plaza at the time of the incident. The sound patterns consituting the evidence, assumed to be echo impulses of shots during the six critical seconds, did in fact provide a much better match to experimentally-produced patterns for four shots than any other number of shots. But rock drummer Steve Barber discovered, faintly recorded on the dictabelt in the same time interval, words known to be spoken by Sheriff Bill Decker more than a minute after the assassination (Posner, 1993)—an observation that obviated any relationship between the putative echo impulses and the actual number of shots. The lesson is that the utility of numerical probabilities calculated within a posited inferential structure depends on the structure's fidelity to the real-world situation in question.

7 Dempster-Shafer belief theory (Shafer, 1976) extends Bayesian inference in a manner that can also withhold support from all or some possibilities without having to assign support to other possibilities.

# References

American Council on the Training of Foreign Languages. (1989). *ACTFL proficiency guidelines.* Yonkers, NY: Author.

Aitkin, M., & Longford, N. (1986). Statistical modeling issues in school effectiveness studies. *Journal of the Royal Statistical Society, Series A, 149,* 1-43.

American Council on the Training of Foreign Languages. (1989). *ACTFL proficiency guidelines.* Yonkers, NY: Author.

Andreassen, S., Jensen, F.V., & Olesen, K.G. (1990). Medical expert systems based on causal probabilistic networks. Aalborg, Denmark: Institute of Electronic Systems, Aalborg University.

Andersen, S.K., Jensen, F.V., Olesen, K.G., & Jensen, F. (1989). *HUGIN: A shell for building Bayesian belief universes for expert systems* [computer program]. Aalborg, Denmark: HUGIN Expert Ltd.

Anderson, T.J., & Twining, W.L. (1991). *Analysis of evidence.* Boston: Little, Brown, & Co.

Askin, W. (1985). *Evaluating the Advanced Placement portfolio in studio art.* Princeton, NJ: Educational Testing Service.

Bentham, J. (1825). *A treatise on judicial evidence.* London: Hunt & Clarke.

Bentham, J. (1827). *Rationale of judicial evidence.* London: Hunt & Clarke.

Box, G.E.P., & Tiao, G.C. (1973). *Bayesian inference in statistical analysis.* Reading, Mass: Addison-Wesley.

Cohen, L.J. (1977). *The probable and the provable.* Oxford: The Clarendon Press.

Cronbach, L.J., Gleser, G.C., Nanda, H., & Rajaratnam, N. (1972). *The dependability of behavioral measurements: Theory of generalizability for scores and profiles.* New York: Wiley.

de Finetti, B. (1974). *Theory of probability.* London: Wiley.

Diaconis, P., & Freedman, D. (1980). Finite exchangeable sequences. *The Annals of Probability, 8,* 745-764.

Falmagne, J-C. (1989). A latent trait model via a stochastic learning theory for a knowledge space. *Psychometrika, 54,* 283-303.

Glaser, R., Lesgold, A., & Lajoie, S. (1987). Toward a cognitive theory for the measurement of achievement. In R. Ronning, J. Glover, J.C. Conoley, & J. Witt (Eds.), *The influence of cognitive psychology on testing and measurement: The Buros-Nebraska Symposium on measurement and testing* (Vol. 3) (pp. 41-85). Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.

Greeno, J.G. (1989). A perspective on thinking. *American Psychologist, 44,* 134-141.

Gulliksen, H. (1961). Measurement of learning and mental abilities. *Psychometrika, 26,* 93-107.

Haertel, E.H., & Wiley, D.E. (1993). Representations of ability structures: Implications for testing. In N. Frederiksen, R.J. Mislevy, & I.I. Bejar (Eds.), *Test theory for a new generation of tests* (pp. 359-384). Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.

Holland, P.W., & Rosenbaum, P.R. (1986). Conditional association and unidimensionality in monotone latent trait variable models. *Annals of Statistics, 14,* 1523-1543.

Inhelder, B., & Piaget, J. (1958). *The growth of logical thinking from childhood to adolescence.* New York: Basic.

Jöreskog, K.G., & Sörbom, D. (1979). *Advances in factor analysis and structural equation models.* Cambridge, MA: Abt Books.

Kahneman, D., Slovic, P., & Tversky, A. (1982). Judgment under uncertainty: Heuristics and biases. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Kempf, W. (1983). Some theoretical concerns about applying latent trait models in educational testing. In S.B. Anderson & J.S. Helmick (Eds.), *On educational testing.* San Francisco: Josey-Bass.

Kolmogorov, A.N. (1950). *Foundations of the theory of probability.* New York: Chelsea.

Koretz, D. (1992) Evaluating and validating indicators of mathematics and science education. *RAND Note No. N-2900-NSF.* Santa Monica, CA: RAND.

Kuhn, T.S. (1970). *The structure of scientific revolutions* (2nd edition). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Kyllonen, P.C., Lohman, D.F., & Snow, R.E. (1984). Effects of aptitudes, strategy training, and test facets on spatial task performance. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 76,* 130-145.

Lakatos, I. (1970). Falsification and the methodology of scientific research programs. In I. Lakatos & A. Musgrove (Eds.), *Criticism and the growth of knowledge.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Lauritzen, S.L., & Spiegelhalter, D.J. (1988). Local computations with probabilities on graphical structures and their application to expert systems (with discussion). *Journal of the Royal Statistical Society, Series B, 50,* 157-224.

Lazarsfeld, P.F. (1950). The logical and mathematical foundation of latent structure analysis. In S.A. Stouffer, L. Guttman, E.A. Suchman, P.F. Lazarsfeld, S.A. Star, & J.A. Clausen, *Studies in social psychology in World War II, Volume 4: Measurement and prediction* (pp. 362-412). Princeton, NJ: Princeton university Press.

Levine, M., & Drasgow, F. (1982). Appropriateness measurement: Review, critique, and validating studies. *British Journal of Mathematical and Statistical Psychology, 35,* 42-56.

Lewis, C. (1986). Test theory and *Psychometrika*: The past twenty-five years. *Psychometrika, 51,* 11-22.

Linacre, J. M. (1989). *Multi-faceted Rasch measurement.* Chicago: MESA Press.

Lindley, D.V., & Novick, M.R. (1981). The role of exchangeability of inference. *Annals of Statistics, 9,* 45-58.

Lord, F.M. (1980). *Applications of item response theory to practical testing problems.* Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.

Martin, J.D., & VanLehn, K. (1993). OLEA: Progress toward a multi-activity, Bayesian student modeler. In S.P. Brna, S. Ohlsson, & H. Pain (Eds.), *Artificial intelligence in education: Proceedings of AI-ED 93* (pp. 410-417). Charlottesville, VA: Association for the Advancement of Computing in Education.

Mislevy, R.J. (1986). Bayes modal estimation in item response models. *Psychometrika, 51,* 177-196.

Mislevy, R.J. (in press). Probability-based inference in cognitive diagnosis. In P. Nichols, S. Chipman, & R. Brennan (Eds.), *Cognitively diagnostic assessment.* Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.

Mislevy, R.J., & Sheehan, K.M. (1989). The role of collateral information about examinees in item parameter estimation. *Psychometrika, 54,* 661-679.

Mislevy, R.J., Sheehan, K.M., & Wingersky, M.S. (1993). How to equate tests with little or no data. *Journal of Educational Measurement, 30,* 55-78.

Mislevy, R.J., Yamamoto, K, & Anacker, S. (1992). Toward a test theory for assessing student understanding. In R.A. Lesh & S. Lamon (Eds.), *Assessments of authentic performance in school mathematics* (pp. 293-318). Washington, DC: American Association for the Advancement of Science.

Mitchell, R. (1992). *Testing for learning: How new approaches to evaluation can improve American schools.* New York: The Free Press.

Myford, C.M., & Mislevy, R.J. (in press). Monitoring and improving a portfolio assessment system. ETS Research Report. Princeton, NJ: Educational Testing Service.

Noetic Systems, Inc. (1991). ERGO [computer program]. Baltimore, MD: Author.

Pearl, J. (1988). *Probabilistic reasoning in intelligent systems: Networks of plausible inference.* San Mateo, CA: Kaufmann.

Peploe, M., Wollen, P., & Antonioni, M. (1975). *The passenger.* New York, NY: Random House.

Platt, W.J. (1975). Policy making and international studies in educational evaluation. In A.C. Purves & D.U. Levine (Eds.), *Educational policy and international assessment* (pp. 33-59). Berkeley, CA: McCutchen.

Posner, G. (1993). *Case closed: Lee Harvey Oswald and the assassination of JFK.* New York: Random House.

Rasch, G. (1960/1980). *Probabilistic models for some intelligence and attainment tests.* Copenhagen: Danish Institute for Educational Research/Chicago: University of Chicago Press (reprint).

Rubin, D.B. (1984). Bayesianly justifiable and relevant frequency calculations for the applied statistician. *Annals of Statistics, 12,* 1151-1172.

Schum, D.A. (1981). Sorting out the effects of witness sensitivity and response-criterion placement upon the inferential value of testimonial evidence. *Organizational Behavior and Human Performance, 27,* 153-196. University Press of America.

Schum, D.A. (1987). *Evidence and inference for the intelligence analyst.* Lanham, Md.: University Press of America.

Shafer, G. (1976). *A mathematical theory of evidence.* Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Shafer, G., & Shenoy, P. (1988). Bayesian and belief-function propagation. *Working Paper 121.* Lawrence, KS: School of Business, University of Kansas.

Siegler, R.S. (1981). Developmental sequences within and between concepts. *Monograph of the Society for Research in Child Development, Serial No. 189, 46.*

Spearman, C. (1904). "General intelligence" objectively determined and measured. *American Journal of Psychology, 15,* 201-292.

Spearman, C. (1927). *The abilities of man: Their nature and measurement.* New York: Macmillan

Tatsuoka, K.K. (1983). Rule space: An approach for dealing with misconceptions based on item response theory. *Journal of Educational Measurement, 20,* 345-354.

Tatsuoka, K.K. (1987). Validation of cognitive sensitivity for item response curves. *Journal of Educational Measurement, 24,* 233-245.

Tatsuoka, K.K. (1990). Toward an integration of item response theory and cognitive error diagnosis. In N. Frederiksen, R. Glaser, A. Lesgold, & M.G. Shafto, (Eds.), *Diagnostic monitoring of skill and knowledge acquisition* (pp. 453-488). Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.

Thompson, P.W. (1982). Were lions to speak, we wouldn't understand. *Journal of Mathematical Behavior, 3,* 147-165.

Twining, W.L. (1985). *Theories of evidence: Bentham and Wigmore.* Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

VanLehn, K. (1990). *Mind bugs: The origins of procedural misconceptions.* Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Wainer, H., Dorans, N.J., Flaugher, R., Green, B.F., Mislevy, R.J., Steinberg, L., & Thissen, D. (1990). Computerized adaptive testing: A primer. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Wigmore, J.H. (1937). *The science of judicial proof* (3rd Ed.). Boston: Little, Brown, & Co.

Wolf, D., Bixby, J., Glenn, J., & Gardner, H. (1991). To use their minds well: Investigating new forms of student assessment. In G. Grant (Ed.), *Review of Educational Research, Vol. 17* (pp. 31-74). Washington, DC: American Educational Research Association.

Wright, S. (1934). The method of path coefficients. *Annals of Mathematical Statistics, 5,* 161-215.

Yamamoto, K. (1987). *A model that combines IRT and latent class models.* Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Illinois, Champaign-Urbana.

List of Tables

Table 1

Conditional Probabilities of Correct Response in IRT Example

| Student Parameter ($\theta$) | Item Parameter ($\beta$) | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| | -1 | 0 | 1 |
| -1.5 | .378 | .182 | .076 |
| -.5 | .622 | .378 | .182 |
| .5 | .818 | .622 | .378 |
| 1.5 | .924 | .818 | .622 |

Table 2

Successive Rules Children are Posited to Acquire as Proportional Reasoning Develops[*]

Rule I:     **If the weights on both sides are equal, the beam will balance. If they are not equal, the side with the heavier weight will go down.**

Weight is the "dominant dimension" in this domain of tasks, because children are generally aware that weight is important in the problem earlier than they realize that distance from the fulcrum, the "subordinate dimension," also matters.

Rule II:    **If the weights and distances on both sides are equal, then the beam will balance. If the weights are equal but the distances are not, the side with the longer distance will go down. Otherwise, the side with the heavier weight will go down.**

A child using this rule uses the subordinate dimension only when information from the dominant dimension is equivocal.

Rule III:   **Same as Rule II, except that if the values of both weight and distance are unequal on both sides, the child will "muddle through"** (Siegler, 1981, p.6).

A child using this rule now knows that both dimensions matter, but doesn't know just how they combine.

Rule IV:    **Combine weights and distances correctly** (i.e., compare torques, or products of weights and distances).

[*]    These rules are based on Seigler's (1981) presentation. Stage x signifies being apply to apply all rules up through and including Rule x.

Table 3

Theoretical Conditional Probabilities of Correct Response in Balance Beam Example

| | Task Type | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Stage | E | D | S | CD | CS | CE |
| 0 | .333 | .333 | .333 | .333 | .333 | .333 |
| I | 1.000 | 1.000 | .000 | 1.000 | .000 | .000 |
| II | 1.000 | 1.000 | 1.000 | 1.000 | .000 | .000 |
| III | 1.000 | 1.000 | 1.000 | .333 | .333 | .333 |
| IV | 1.000 | 1.000 | 1.000 | 1.000 | 1.000 | 1.000 |

Table 4

Estimated Conditional Probabilities of Correct Response in Balance Beam Example

| | Task Type | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Stage | E | D | S | CD | CS | CE |
| 0 | .333* | .333* | .333* | .333* | .333* | .333* |
| I | .973 | .973 | .026 | .973 | .026 | .026 |
| II | .883 | .883 | .883 | .883 | .116 | .116 |
| III | .981 | .981 | .981 | .333* | .333* | .333* |
| IV | .943 | .943 | .943 | .943 | .943 | .943 |

\* Denotes fixed value for estimation. Note also that true-positive and false-positive probabilities within a given stage are constrained to be equal across task types, to ensure that the latent class model is identified.

Table 5

Excerpts from the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines for Reading*

| Level | Generic Description |
|-------|---------------------|
| Novice-Low | Able occasionally to identify isolated words and/or major phrases when strongly supported by context. |
| ⋮ | ⋮ |
| Intermediate-Mid | Able to read consistently with increased understanding simple connected texts dealing with a variety of basic and social needs.... They impart basic information about which the reader has to make minimal suppositions and **to which the reader brings personal information and/or knowledge.** Examples may include short, straightforward descriptions of persons, places, and things, written for a wide audience. [emphasis added] |
| ⋮ | ⋮ |
| Advanced | Able to read somewhat longer prose of several paragraphs in length, particularly if presented with a clear underlying structure. **... Comprehension derives not only from situational and subject matter knowledge but from increasing control of the language.** Texts at this level include descriptions and narrations such as simple short stories, news items, bibliographical information, social notices, personal correspondence, routinized business letters, and simple technical material written for the general reader. [emphasis added] |
| Advanced-Plus | ...Able to understand parts of texts which are conceptually abstract and linguistically complex, and/or **texts which treat unfamiliar topics and situations**, as well as some texts which involve aspects of target-language culture. Able to comprehend the facts to make appropriate inferences. ... [emphasis added] |
| Superior | Able to read with almost complete comprehension and at normal speed expository prose on **unfamiliar subjects** and a variety of literary texts. Reading ability is not dependent on subject matter knowledge, although the reader is not expected to comprehend thoroughly texts which are highly dependent on the knowledge of the target culture.... At the superior level the reader can match strategies, top-down or bottom-up, which are most appropriate to the text.... |

* Based on the *ACTFL proficiency guidelines,* American Council on the Training of Foreign Languages (1989).

# List of Figures

Key List

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | I agree [with Walter about putting it in the high range--specifically, a rating of 3] |
| 2 | ...if you read the statement, there's a genuine focus on ideation. |
| 3 | [We see] a person who has done some, at least been directed to, or has independently gone out and looked at, quite a bit of art that's not easy to ingest and not easy to come to grips with. |
| 4 | [The student relates his concentration to the work of Lucas Samaras and Jasper Johns] |
| 5 | [We see] the student's involvement as he's working, responding as he's working through the thing. |
| 6 | It's pretty obvious that when he's using the material, he really responds to it. He's not just simply opting to do something with the material and then just letting that stay in that point. He does something and seems to maybe see beyond that and through it and say, "Hey, I can do this to it now." |
| 7 | I think particularly in the use of the wire [he responds to the material]. |
| 8 | I think that finding the focus is very strong. He's very much right on track with what he says he's doing. |
| 9 | [The pattern of pieces shows development/learning over the course of the work] |
| 10 | ...the beginning elements--the first four of these [would be rated lower]. |
| 11 | One has to realize, though, I think in the production of art--I think we discussed this some earlier today--about that you're going to have moments where things just don't work. |
| 12 | He arranged [the slides] so we would be able to see how he may have evolved through the process. |
| 13 | [The later work is] almost unbelievably better than the first works that you see up there... the transformation that has occurred on the part of the student is the kind of growth that you would like to see take place in a concentration, rather than being slavish to an idea. |
| 14 | ... something [interesting] is down here [in the later work]. |
| 15 | [Good, though not excellent, use of materials and formal elements] |
| 16 | The only problem that may exist with this is the somewhat looseness of the work |
| 17 | It seems to be not as controlled in the sense of skillfully manipulating the materials, in the sense that we traditionally think of it, like if you're directed more toward quote "realistic" work. |
| 18 | But I don't have a problem with this [looseness]. |
| 19 | I find [the looseness] to be very exciting. It's almost kind of, I hate to use the word, but gutsy. The person is obviously one who is very well equipped to taking risks. He's not afraid to really jump into something and really try something rather extraordinary. And I find it to be quite interesting. |
| 20 | [There are many close-ups in the submission] |
| 21 | There may be some problem maybe in the fact that there are so many close-ups of the work, |
| 22 | but I find [the close-ups] to be a way of clarifying to some degree what he's really about in each individual part of the whole unit. |

Figure 1

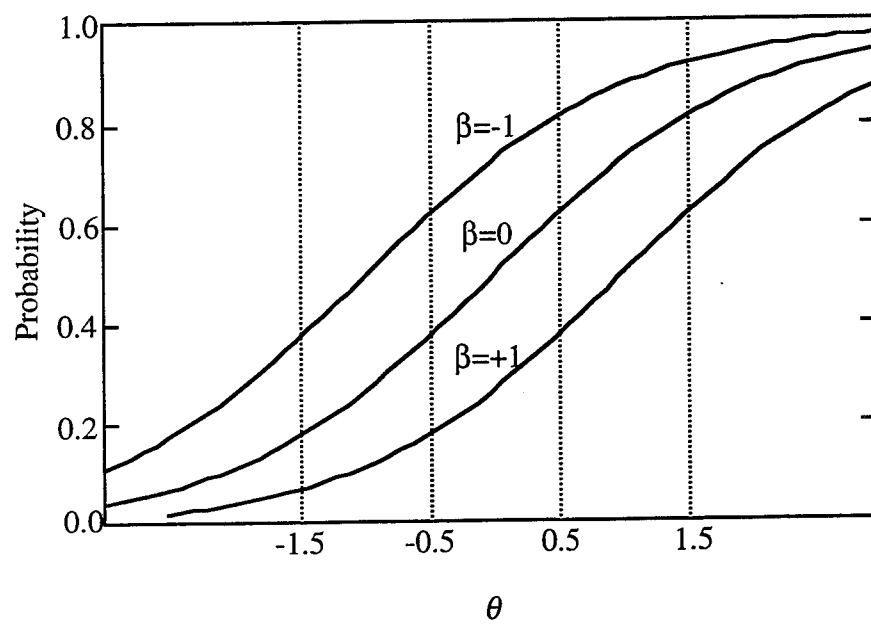Wigmore Chart for Rating an AP Studio Art Concentration Submission

Figure 2

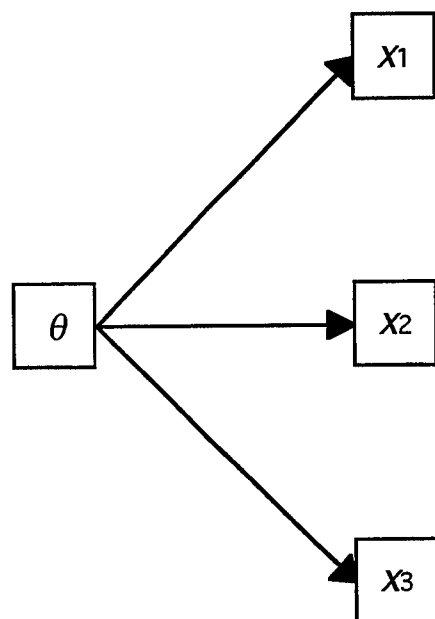Probability of a Correct Response, Conditional on $\theta$, for Items with $\beta = -1$, $=0$, and $=1$
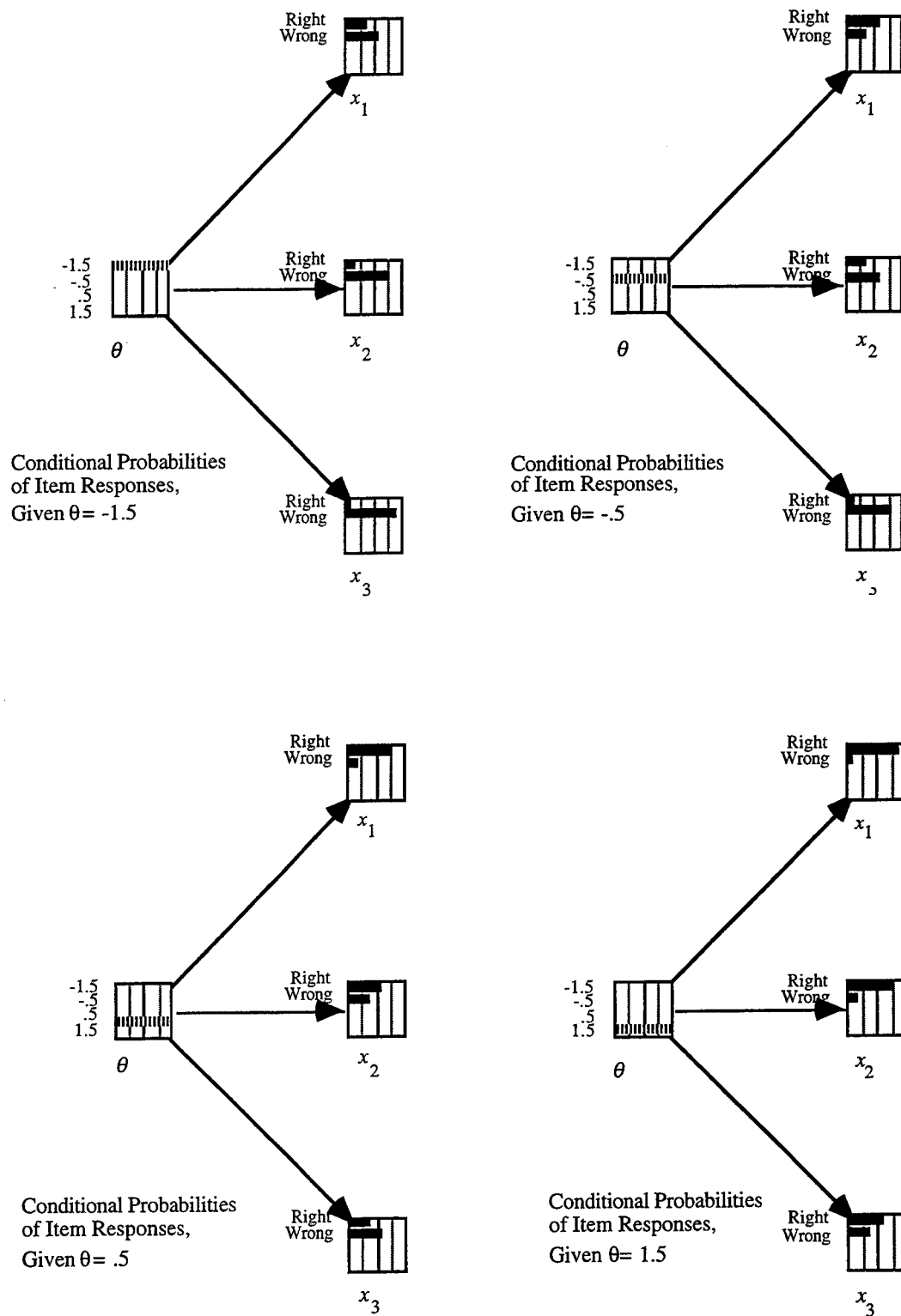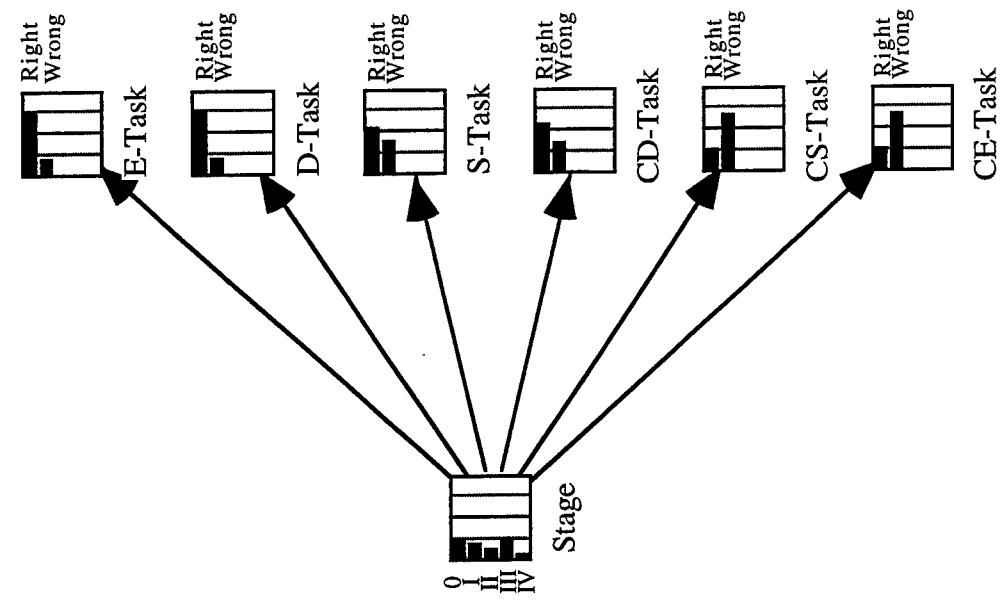
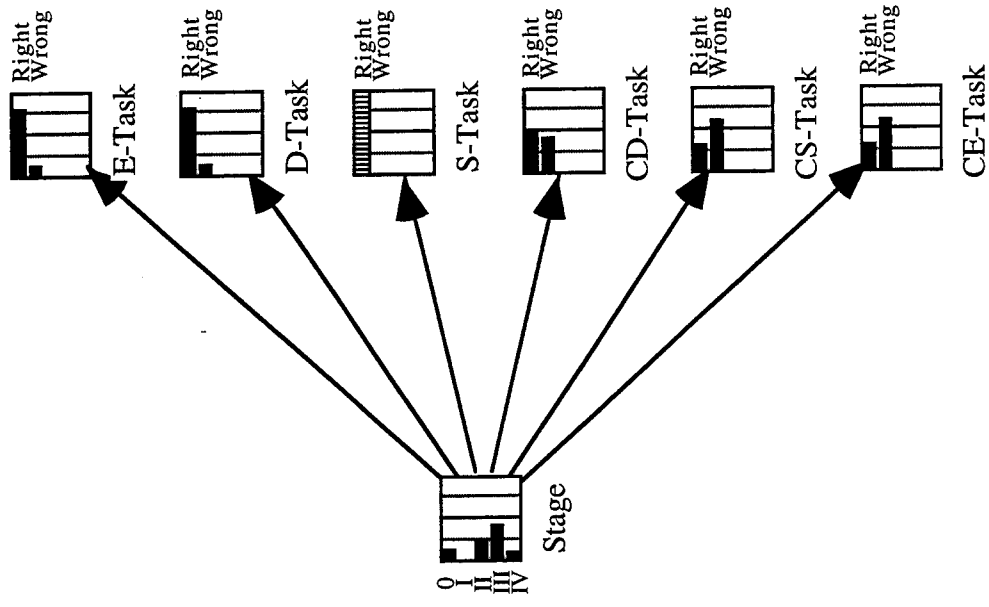Figure 3

Directed Acyclic Graph for the IRT Example

Nodes represent variables; bars represent probabilities of potent values of a variable, summing to one, with a dashed bar to one representing certainty.

Figure 4

Probabilities of Item Responses, Given Student Proficiency.

| Item Type | Sample | Description |
|-----------|--------|-------------|

**E**

**Equal problems (E),** with matching weights and distances on both sides.

**D**

**Dominant problems (D),** with unequal weights but equal distances.

**S**

**Subordinate problems (S),** with unequal distances but equal weights.

**CD**

**Conflict-dominant problems (CD),** in which one side has greater weight, the other has greater distance, and the side with the heavier weight will go down.

**CS**

**Conflict-subordinate problems (CS),** in which one side has greater weight, the other has greater distance, and the side with the greater distance will go down.

**CE**

**Conflict-equal problems (CE),** in which one side has greater weight, the other has greater distance, and the beam will balance.

Figure 5

Basic Types of Balance Beam Tasks

Initial Status

Status After Observing a Correct Response to an S Task

Right Wrong — E-Task
Right Wrong — D-Task
Right Wrong — S-Task
Right Wrong — CD-Task
Right Wrong — CS-Task
Right Wrong — CE-Task

Stage
0 I II III IV

Figure 6

Belief in Balance Beam Example, Before and After Observing a Correct Response to an S Task
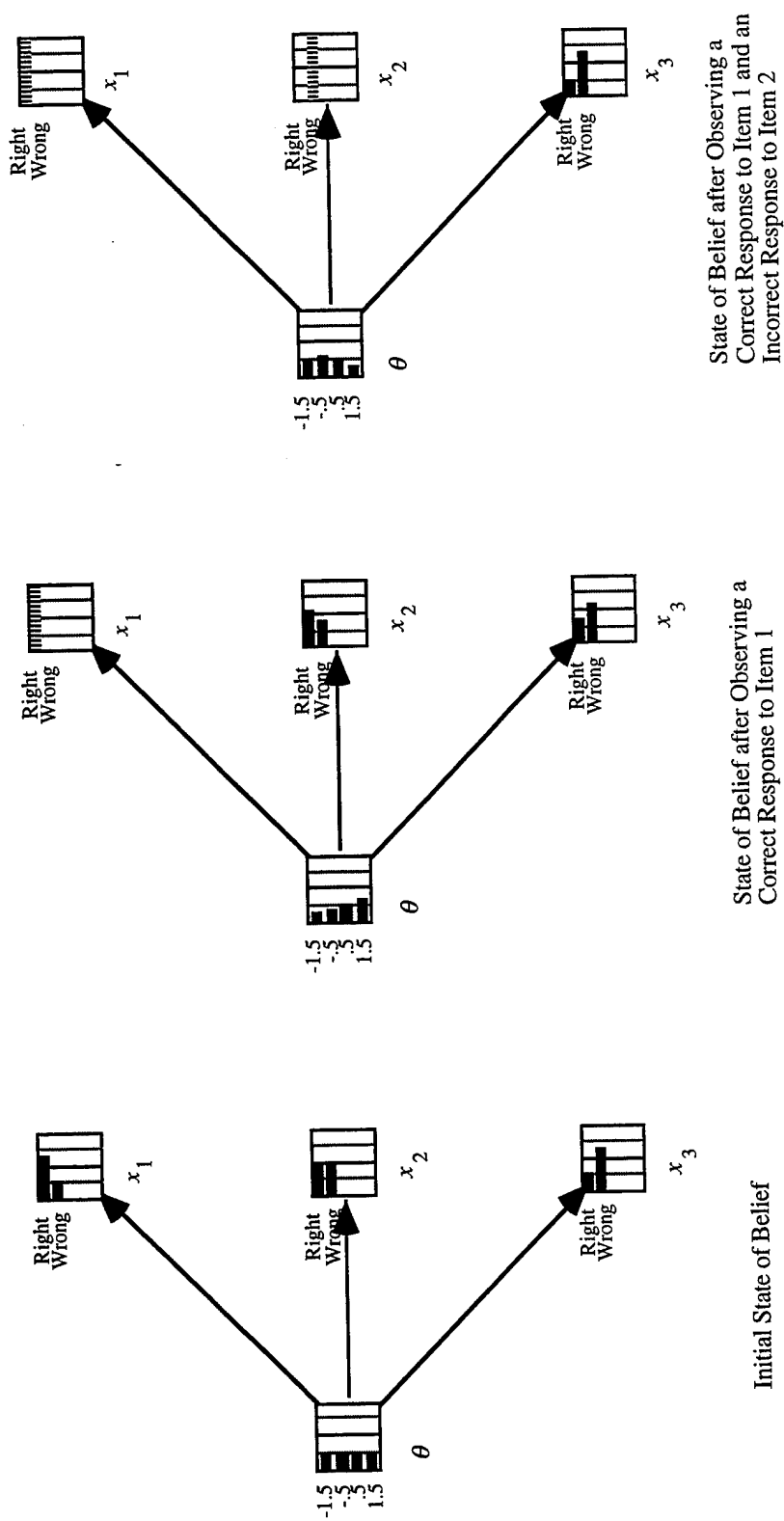
Right
Wrong

$x_1$

Right
Wrong

$x_2$

Right
Wrong

$x_3$

-1.5
-.5
.5
1.5

$\theta$

State of Belief after Observing a
Correct Response to Item 1 and an
Incorrect Response to Item 2

Right
Wrong

$x_1$

Right
Wrong

$x_2$

Right
Wrong

$x_3$

-1.5
-.5
.5
1.5

$\theta$

State of Belief after Observing a
Correct Response to Item 1

Right
Wrong

$x_1$

Right
Wrong

$x_2$

Right
Wrong

$x_3$

-1.5
-.5
.5
1.5

$\theta$

Initial State of Belief

Nodes represent variables; bars represent probabilities of potent values of a
variable, summing to one, with a dashed bar to one representing certainty.

Figure 7

Posterior Probabilities for Proficiency after Observing a Sequence of Item Responses.
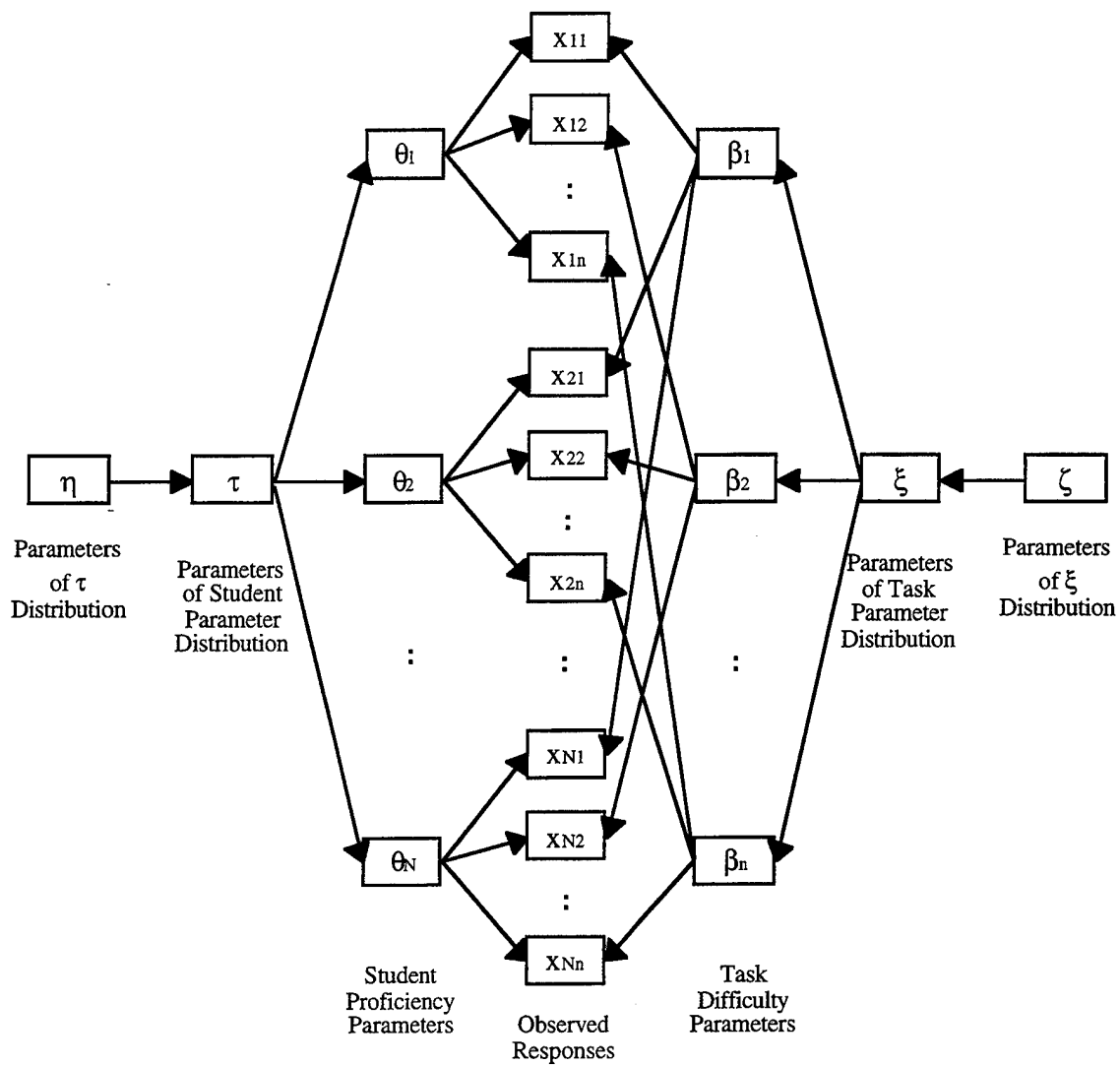
Figure 8

More Complete Directed Acyclic Graph for the IRT Example
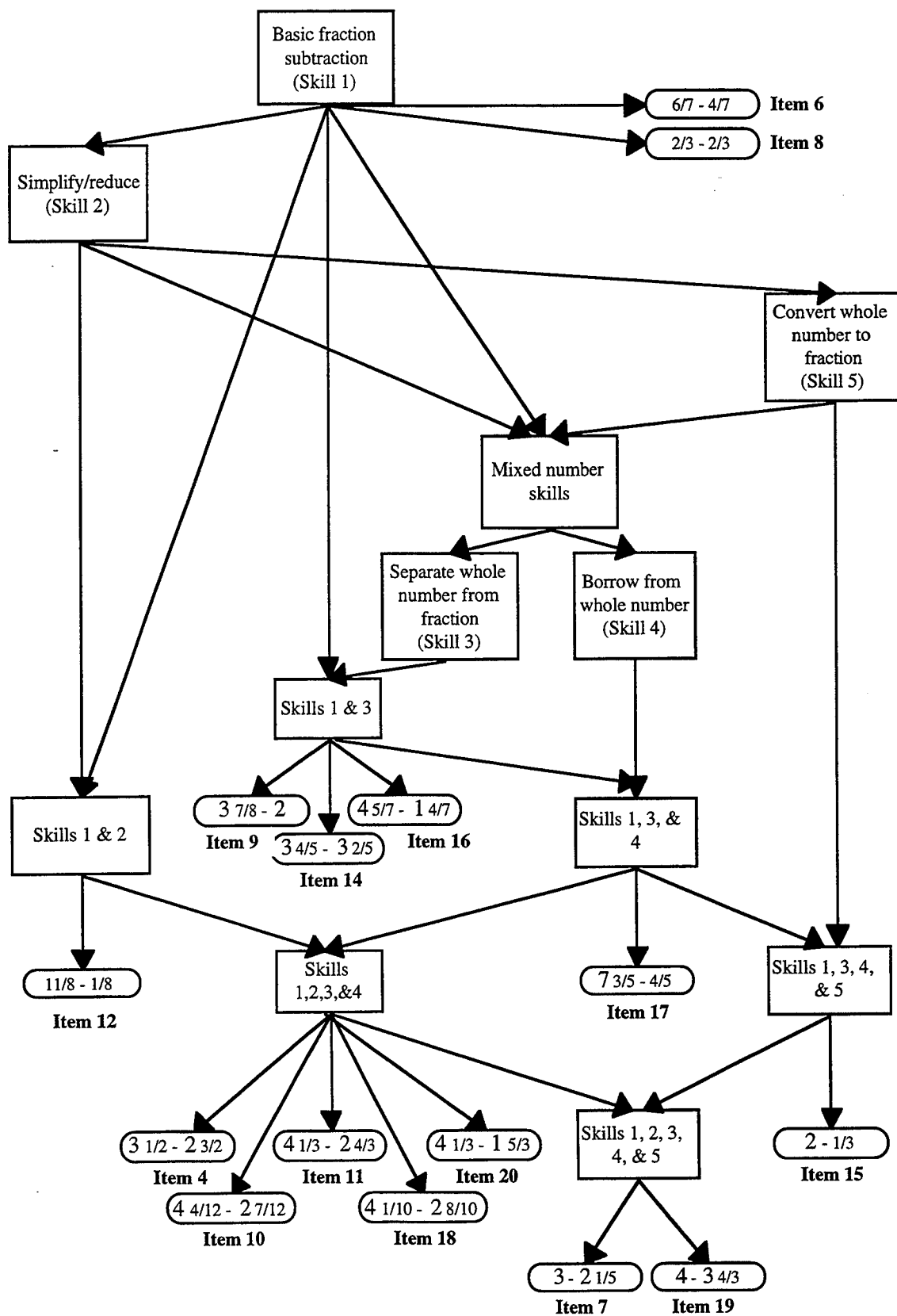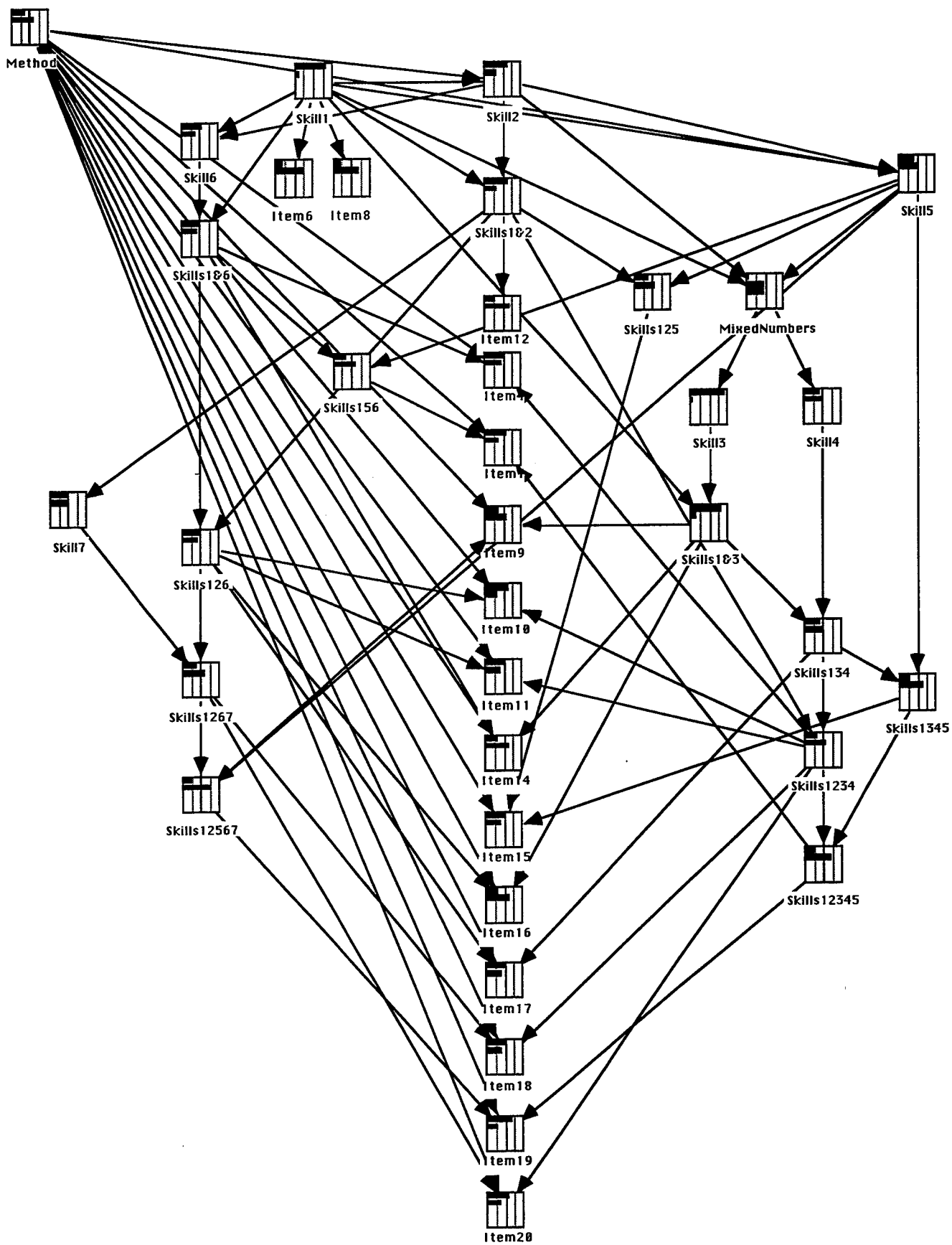
Figure 9

Directed Acyclic Graph for Method B
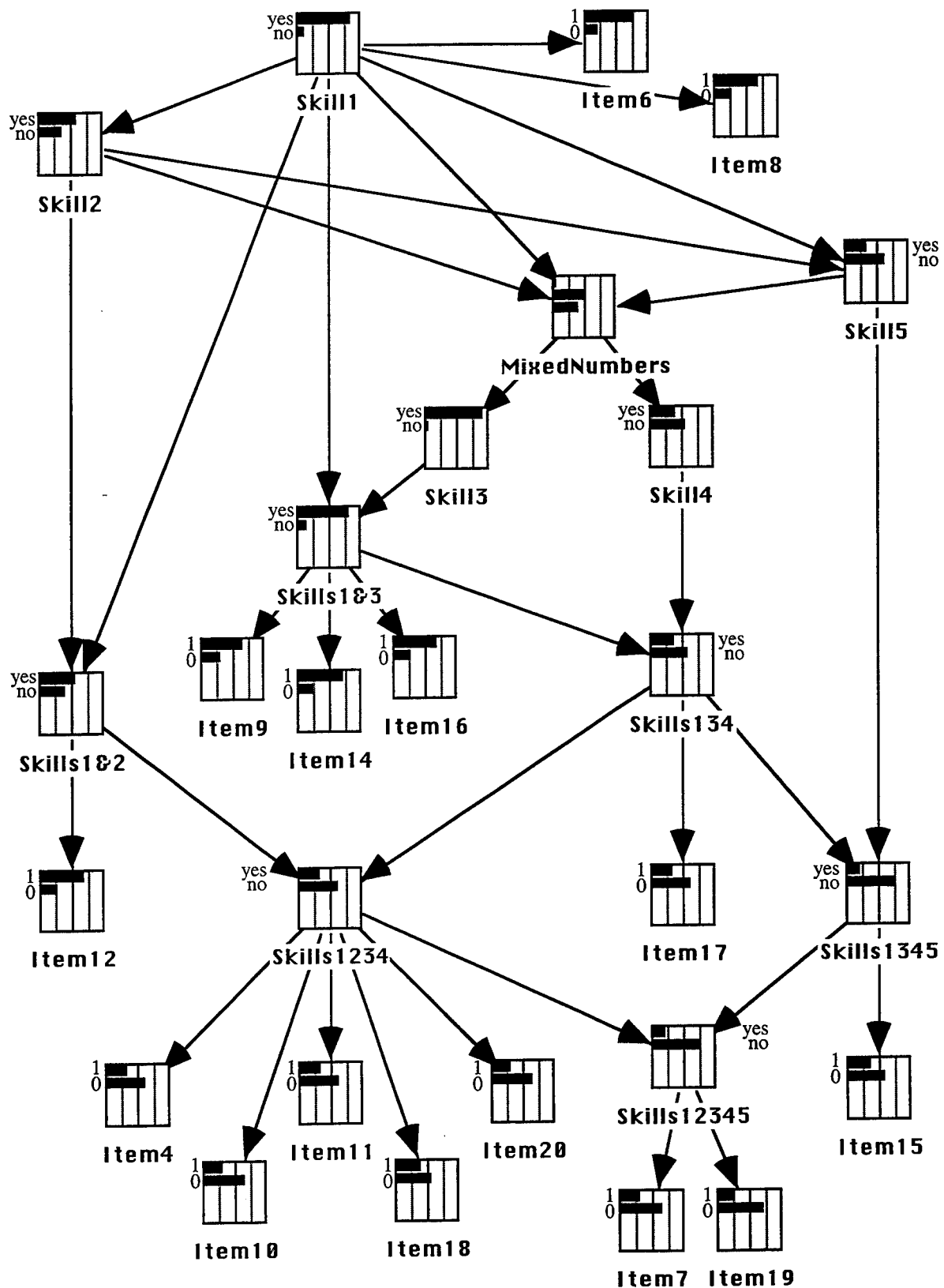
Note: Bars represent probabilities, summing to one for all the possible values of a variable.

Figure 10

Inference Network for Method B, Initial Status
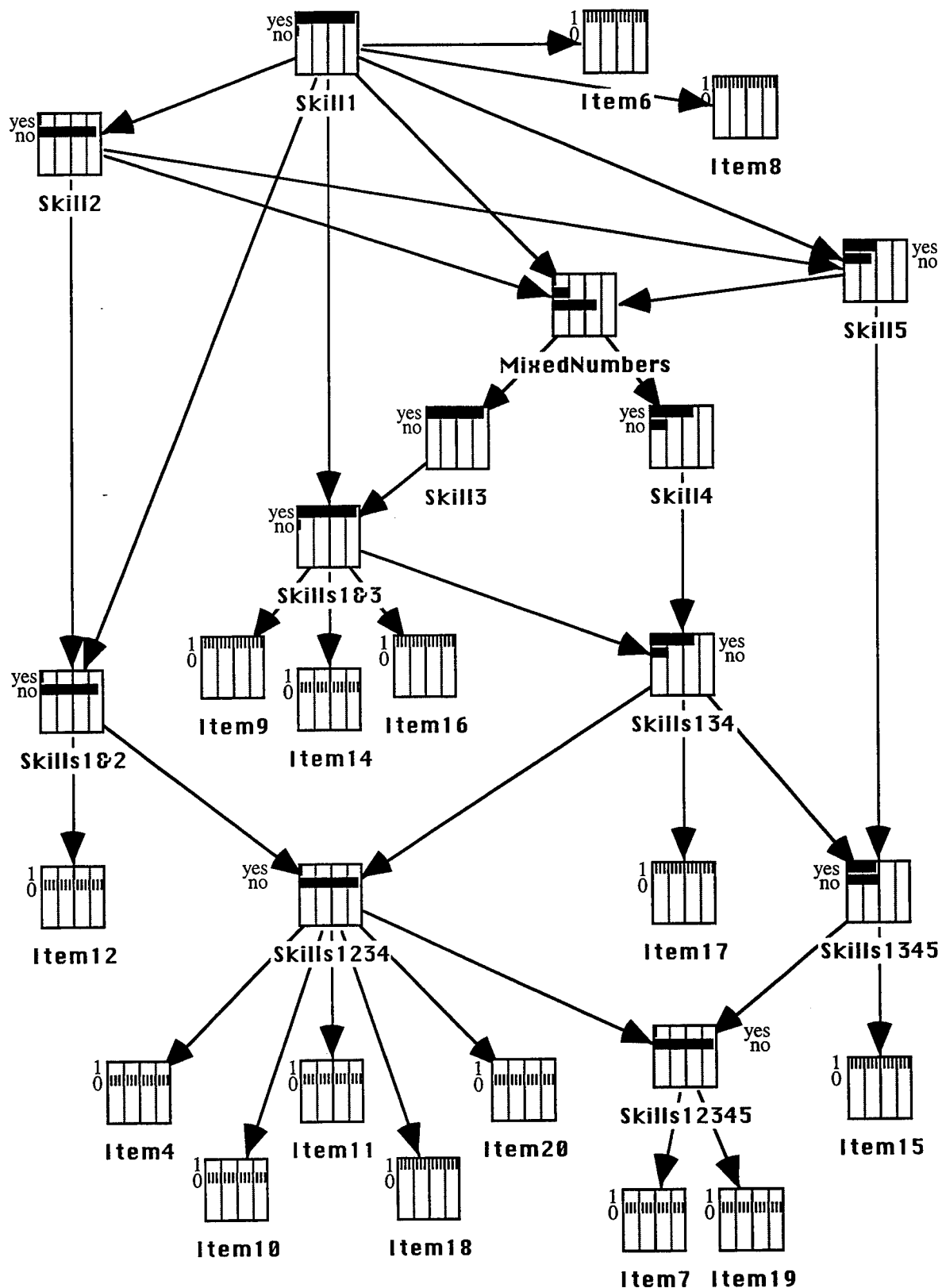
Bars represent probabilities, summing to one for all the possible values of a variable. A shaded bar extending the full width of a node represents certainty, due to having observed the value of that variable.

Figure 11

Inference Network for Method B, After Observing Item Responses

Figure 12

Directed Acyclic Graph for Both Methods
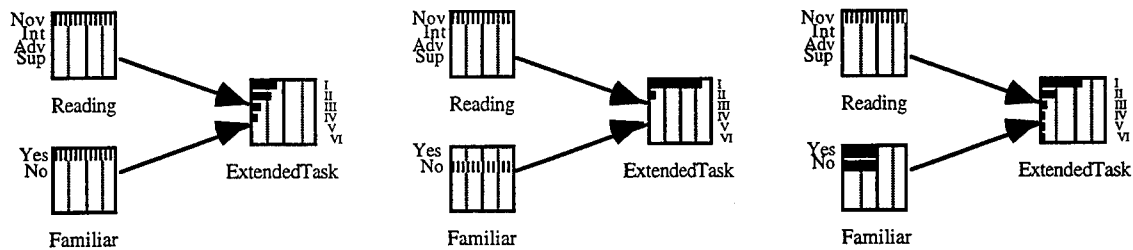
Expected distribution of extended-task response categories from a **Novice** Reader, for a text known to be familiar, a text known to be unfamiliar, and a text of unknown familiarity.
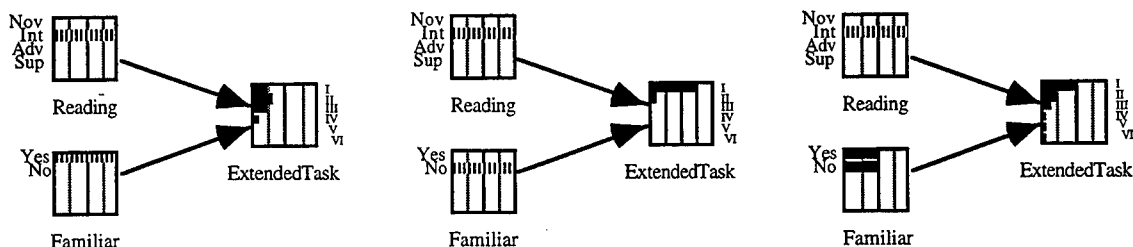


Expected distribution of extended-task response categories from an **Intermediate** Reader, for a text known to be familiar, a text known to be unfamiliar, and a text of unknown familiarity.
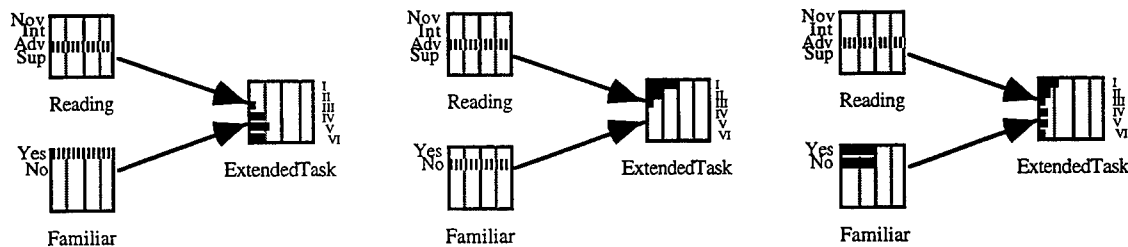


Expected distribution of extended-task response categories from an **Advanced** Reader, for a text known to be familiar, a text known to be unfamiliar, and a text of unknown familiarity.
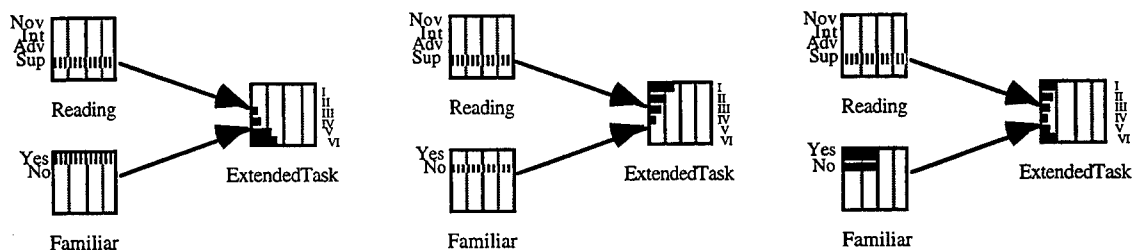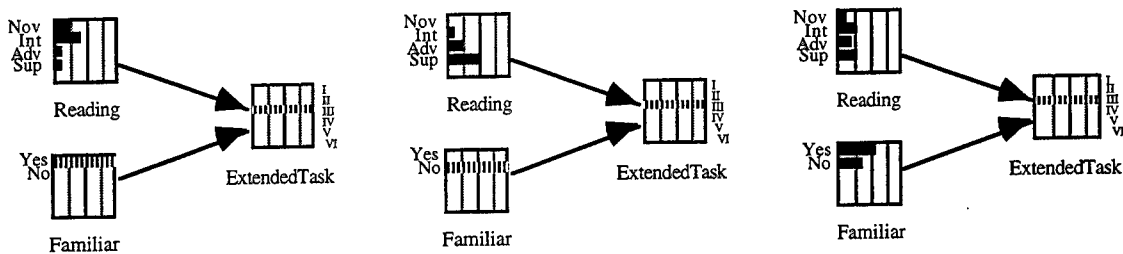


Expected distribution of extended-task response categories from a **Superior** Reader, for a text known to be familiar, a text known to be unfamiliar, and a text of unknown familiarity.
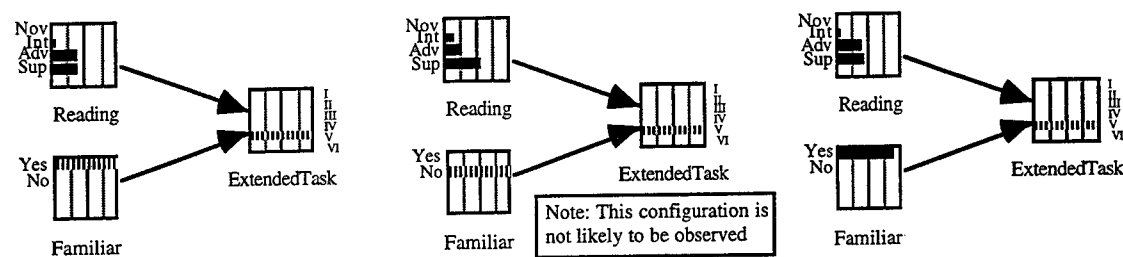
Figure 13

Probabilities of Task Response Categories, Conditional on Student

Competence and Familiarity with Text.
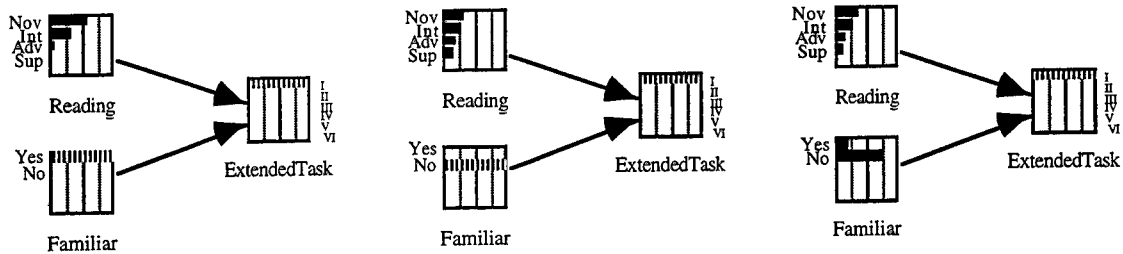
Implications of a Level I Response, with Familiarity = "Yes", "No", and Unknown



Implications of a Level III Response, with Familiarity = "Yes", "No", and Unknown



Note: This configuration is not likely to be observed

Implications of a Level V Response, with Familiarity = "Yes", "No", and Unknown

Note: Nodes represent variables. Bars represent probabilities of potential values of a variable, adding up to one. A dashed bar represents certainty.

Figure 14

Posterior Probabilities for Student Proficiency After Observing Task Response, under Various States of Knowledge about Task Familiarity

Posterior
Probabilities
.25   Nov
.42   Int
.17   Adv
.17   Sup

Reading

Yes
No

Familiar

I
II
III
IV
V
VI

ExtendedTask

Posterior
Probabilities
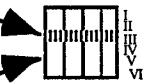.00   Nov
.14   Int
.29   Adv
.57   Sup

Reading

Yes
No

Familiar

I
II
III
IV
V
VI

ExtendedTask

Implications of a Level III Response, with Familiarity = "Yes" and "No"

Posterior
Probabilities
.06   Nov
.21   Int
.26   Adv
.47   Sup

Reading

Yes
No

Familiar

I
II
III
IV
V
VI

ExtendedTask

Yes
No

Reported

Implications of a Level III Response, with *Reported* Familiarity = "No"

Note: Nodes represent variables. Bars represent probabilities of potential
values of a variable, adding up to one. A dashed bar represents certainty.

Figure 15

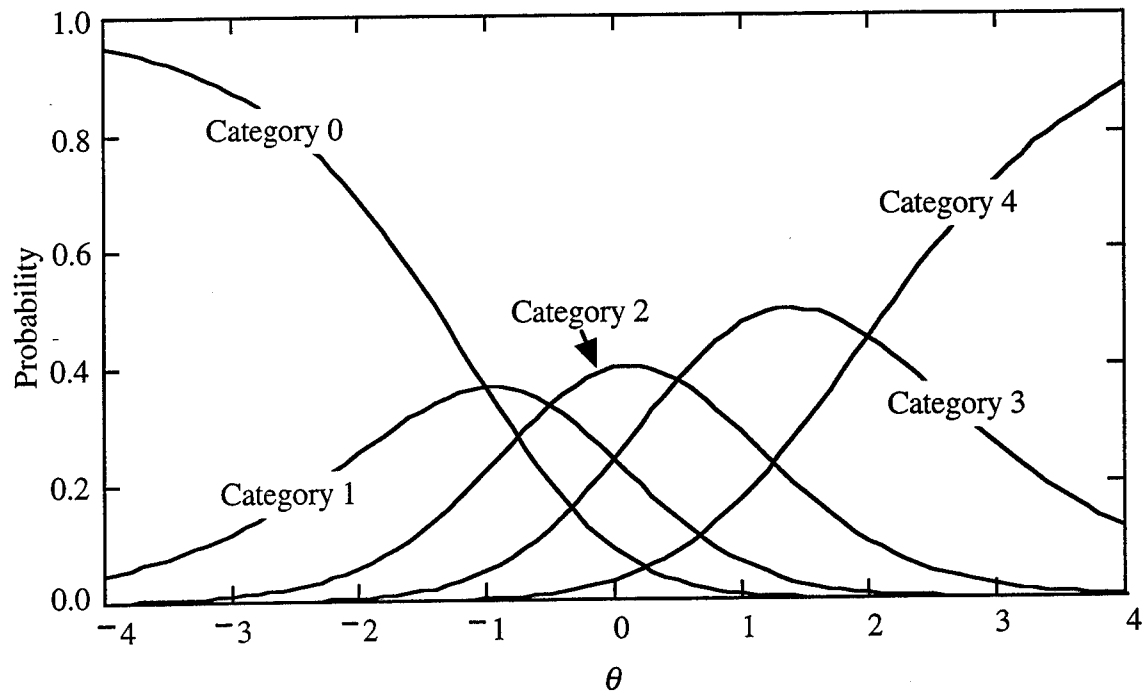Implications of a Level III Response, with Reported Familiarity = "No"

Figure 16

Probability of a Response in Categories as a Function of $\theta$, for a Task
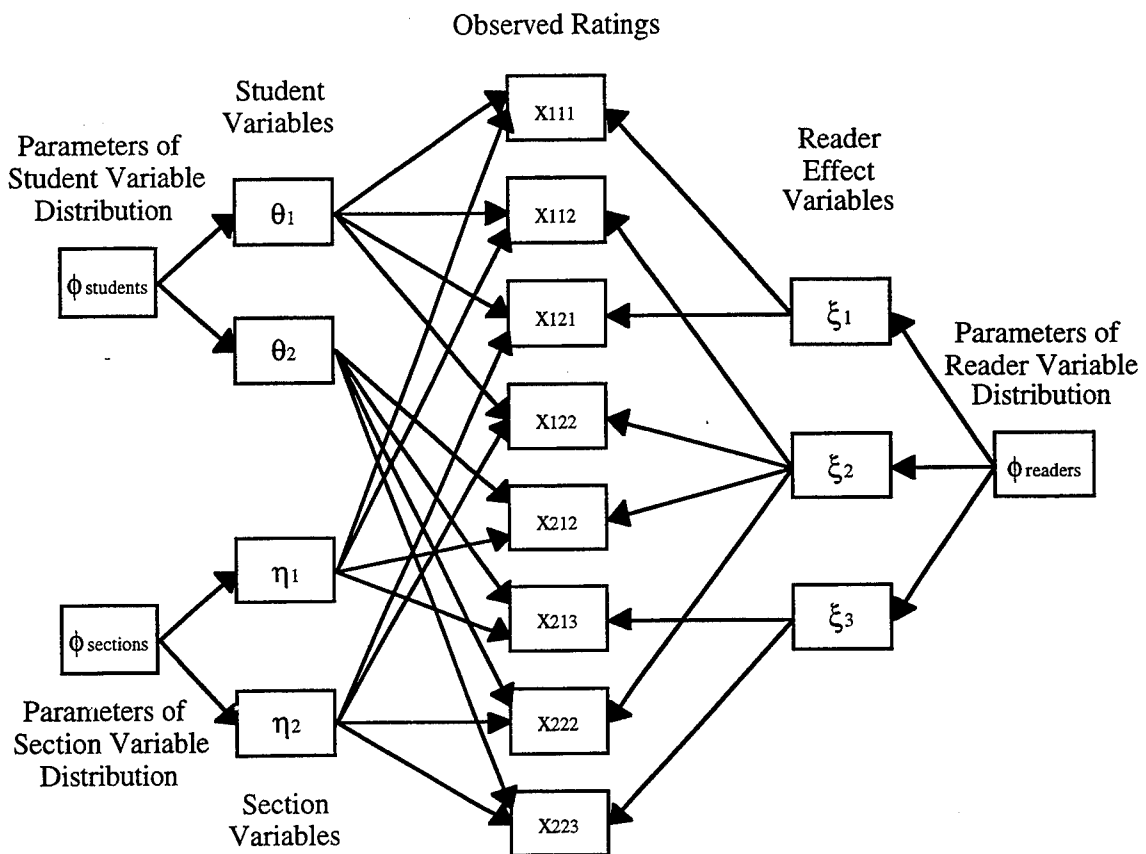with $\eta=0$, a Reader with $\xi=0$, and $\tau=(1,.5,-.5,-2)$

Figure 17

Directed Acyclic Graph for the AP Studio Art Example

Figure 18
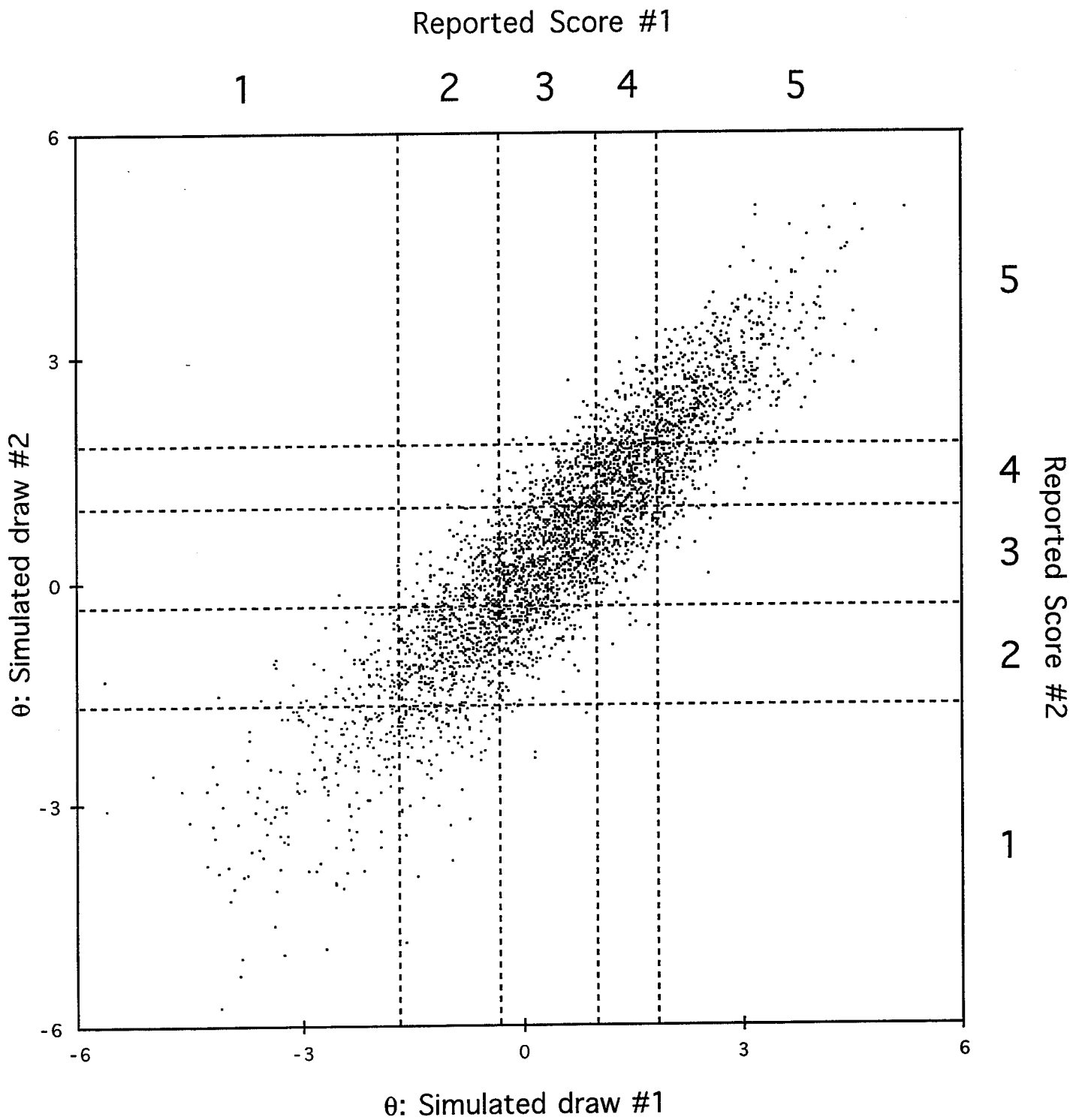
Two Draws from the Posterior Distributions of Portfolio Parameters

Dr Terry Ackerman
Educational Psychology
260C Education Bldg
University of Illinois
Champaign IL 61801

Dr Robert L Albright
Educational Testing Service
16-C Rosedale Road
Princeton, NJ  08541

Dr Terry Allard
Code 3422
Office of Naval Research
800 N Quincy St
Arlington VA 22217-5660

Dr Nancy Allen
Educational Testing Service
Mail Stop 02-T
Princeton NJ 08541

Dr Phipps Arabie
Graduate School of Management
Rutgers University
92 New Street
Newark NJ 07102-1895

Dr Isaac I Bejar
Educational Testing Service
Mail Stop 11-R
Princeton NJ  08541

Dr William O Berry
Director
Life and Environmental Sciences
AFOSR/NL N1
Bldg 410
Bolling AFB  DC 20332-6448

Dr Thomas G Bever
Department of Psychology
University of Rochester
River Station
Rochester NY  14627

Dr Menucha Birenbaum
School of Education
Tel Aviv University
Ramat-Aviv 69978 ISRAEL

Dr Bruce Bloxom
Defense Manpower Data Center
99 Pacific St
Suite 155A
Monterey CA 93943-3231

Dr Gwyneth Boodoo
Educational Testing Service
Mail Stop 03-T
Princeton NJ 08541

Dr Richard L Branch
HQ  USMEPCOM/MEPCT
2500 Green Bay Road
North Chicago IL 60064

Dr Robert Brennan
American College Testing
2201 North Dodge Street
PO Box 168
Iowa City IA 52243

Dr David V Budescu
Department of Psychology
University of Haifa
Mount Carmel  Haifa 31999
ISRAEL

Dr Gregory Candell
CTB/MacMillan/McGraw-Hill
2500 Garden Road
Monterey CA 93940

Dr Susan Chipman
Cognitive Science Program
Office of Naval Research
800 North Quincy Street
Code 3422
Arlington VA 22217-5660

Dr Raymond E Christal
UES LAMP Science Advisor
AL/HRMIL
Brooks AFB TX 78235

Dr Norman Cliff
Department of Psychology
University of Southern California
Los Angeles CA 90089-1061

Dr Nancy S Cole
Educational Testing Service
14-C Rosedale Road
Princeton NJ  08541

Commanding Officer
Naval Research Laboratory
Code 4827
Washington DC  20375-5000

Dr John M Cornwell
Department of Psychology
I/O Psychology Program
Tulane University
New Orleans LA  70118

Dr Linda Curran
Defense Manpower Data Center
Suite 400
1600 Wilson Blvd
Rosslyn VA 22209

Professor Clément Dassa
Faculté des sciences de l'éducation
Département d'études en éducation
et d'administration de l'éducation
CP 6128  succursale A
Montéal Québec
CANADA  H3C 3J7

Dr Timothy Davey
American College Testing
2201 North Dodge Street
PO Box 168
Iowa City IA 52243

Dr Charles E Davis
Educational Testing Service
Mail Stop 16-T
Princeton NJ  08541

Dr Ralph J DeAyala
Meas Stat and Eval
Benjamin Bldg Room 1230F
University of Maryland
College Park MD 20742

Director
Life Sciences
Code 3420
Office of Naval Research
Arlington VA  22217-5660

Hei-Ki Dong
BELLCORE
6 Corporate Place
RM: PYA-1K207
PO Box 1320
Piscataway NJ 08855-1320

Dr Neil Dorans
Educational Testing Service
Mail Stop 07-E
Princeton NJ 08541

Dr Fritz Drasgow
University of Illinois
Department of Psychology
603 E Daniel Street
Champaign IL 61820

Defense Tech Information Center
Cameron Station Bldg 5
Alexandria VA 22314
(2 Copies)

Dr Richard Duran
Graduate School of Education
University of California
Santa Barbara CA  93106

Dr Susan Embretson
University of Kansas
Psychology Department
426 Fraser
Lawrence KS 66045

Dr George Engelhard Jr
Division of Educational Studies
Emory University
210 Fishburne Bldg
Atlanta GA 30322

Dr Marshall J Farr
Farr-Sight Co
2520 North Vernon Street
Arlington VA 22207

Dr Leonard Feldt
Lindquist Center for Measurement
University of Iowa
Iowa City IA 52242

Dr Richard L Ferguson
American College Testing
2201 North Dodge Street
PO Box 168
Iowa City IA 52243

Dr Gerhard Fischer
Liebiggasse 5
A 1010 Vienna
AUSTRIA

Dr Myron Fischl
US Army Headquarters
DAPE-HR
The Pentagon
Washington DC  20310-0300

Mr Paul Foley
Navy Personnel R&D Center
San Diego CA 92152-6800

Chair
Department of Computer Science
George Mason University
Fairfax VA  22030

Dr Robert D Gibbons
University of Illinois at Chicago
NPI 909A  M/C 913
912 South Wood Street
Chicago IL  60612

Dr Janice Gifford
University of Massachusetts
School of Education
Amherst MA 01003

Dr Robert Glaser
Learning Res & Dev Cntr
University of Pittsburgh
3939 O'Hara Street
Pittsburgh PA 15260

Dr Susan R Goldman
Peabody College
Box 45
Vanderbilt University
Nashville TN  37203

Dr Timothy Goldsmith
Department of Psychology
University of New Mexico
Albuquerque NM 87131

Dr Sherrie Gott
AFHRL/MOMJ
Brooks AFB  TX 78235-5601

Dr Bert Green
Johns Hopkins University
Department of Psychology
Charles & 34th Street
Baltimore MD 21218

Professor Edward Haertel
School of Education
Stanford University
Stanford CA  94305-3096

Dr Ronald K Hambleton
University of Massachusetts
Lab of Psychom & Eval Res
Hills South Room 152
Amherst MA 01003

Dr Delwyn Harnisch
University of Illinois
51 Gerty Drive
Champaign IL 61820

Dr Patrick R Harrison
Computer Science Department
US Naval Academy
Annapolis MD  21402-5002

Ms Rebecca Hetter
Navy Personnel R&D Center
Code 13
San Diego CA 92152-6800

Dr Thomas M Hirsch
American College Testing
2201 North Dodge Street
PO Box 168
Iowa City IA 52243

Professor Paul W Holland
Div of Educ Psych &
   Quant Methods Prog
Graduate School of Education
4511 Tolman Hall
University of California-Berkeley
Berkeley CA  94720

Professor Lutz F Hornke
Institut fur Psychologie
RWTH Aachen
Jaegerstrasse 17/19
D-5100 Aachen
WEST GERMANY

Ms Julia S Hough
Cambridge University Press
40 West 20th Street
New York NY 10011

Dr William Howell
Chief Scientist
AFHRL/CA
Brooks AFB  TX 78235-5601

Dr Huynh Huynh
College of Education
University of South Carolina
Columbia SC 29208

Dr Martin J Ippel
Center for the Study of
  Education & Instruction
Leiden University
PO Box 9555
2300 RB Leiden
THE NETHERLANDS

Dr Robert Jannarone
Elec and Computer Eng Dept
University of South Carolina
Columbia SC 29208

Dr Kumar Joag-dev
University of Illinois
Department of Statistics
101 Illini Hall
725 South Wright Street
Champaign IL 61820

Professor Douglas H Jones
Grad Sch of Management
Rutgers The State University
NJ Newark NJ  07102

Dr Brian Junker
Carnegie-Mellon University
Department of Statistics
Pittsburgh PA 15213

Dr Marcel Just
Carnegie-Mellon University
Department of Psychology
Schenley Park
Pittsburgh PA 15213

Dr J L Kaiwi
Code 442/JK
Naval Ocean Systems Center
San Diego CA  92152-5000

Dr Michael Kaplan
Office of Basic Research
US Army Research Institute
5001 Eisenhower Avenue
Alexandria VA  22333-5600

Dr Jeremy Kilpatrick
Dept of Mathematics Education
105 Aderhold Hall
University of Georgia
Athens GA   30602

Ms Hae-Rim Kim
University of Illinois
Department of Statistics
101 Illini Hall
725 South Wright Street
Champaign IL 61820

Dr. Jwa-keun Kim
Department of Psychology
Middle Tennessee State University
Murfreesboro TN 37132

Dr Sung-Hoon Kim
KEDI
92-6 Umyeon-Dong
Seocho-Gu
Seoul
SOUTH KOREA

Dr G Gage Kingsbury
Portland Public Schools
Res & Eval Department
501 North Dixon Street
PO Box 3107
Portland OR 97209-3107

Dr William Koch
Box 7246
Meas & Eval Center
University of Texas-Austin
Austin TX 78703

Dr James Kraatz
Computer-based Ed Res Lab
University of Illinois
Urbana IL 61801

Dr Patrick Kyllonen
AFHRL/MOEL
Brooks AFB TX 78235

Ms Carolyn Laney
1515 Spencerville Rod
Spencerville MD  20868

Richard Lanterman
Commandant (G-PWP)
US Coast Guard
2100 Second Street SW
Washington DC 20593-0001

Dr Michael Levine
Educational Psychology
210 Education Building
1310 South Sixth Street
Univ of IL at Urbana-Champaign
Champaign IL  61820-6990

Dr Charles Lewis
Educational Testing Service
Mail Stop 03-T
Princeton NJ 08541-0001

Mr Hsin-hung Li
University of Illinois
Department of Statistics
101 Illini Hall
725 South Wright Street
Champaign IL 61820

Library
Naval Training Systems Center
12350 Research Parkway
Orlando FL  32826-3224

Dr Marcia C Linn
Graduate School of Education
EMST
Tolman Hall
University of California
Berkeley CA 94720

Dr Robert L Linn
Campus Box 249
University of Colorado
Boulder CO  80309-0249

Dr Richard Luecht
American College Testing
2201 North Dodge Street
PO Box 168
Iowa City IA 52243

Dr. George Macready
Professor
Dept of Meas., Stat. & Eval.
College of Education
Room 1230C, Benjamin Bldg.
University of Maryland
College Park MD 20742

Dr Evans Mandes
George Mason University
4400 University Drive
Fairfax VA   22030

Dr Paul Mayberry
Center for Naval Analysis
4401 Ford Avenue
PO Box 16268
Alexandria VA 22302-0268

Dr James R McBride
HumRRO
6430 Elmhurst Drive
San Diego CA 92120

Mr Christopher McCusker
University of Illinois
Department of Psychology
603 E Daniel Street
Champaign IL 61820

Dr Joseph McLachlan
Navy Pers Res & Dev Cntr
Code 14
San Diego CA  92152-6800

Alan Mead
c/o Dr Michael Levine
Educational Psychology
210 Education Bldg
University of Illinois
Champaign IL 61801

Dr Timothy Miller
American College Testing
2201 North Dodge Street
PO Box 168
Iowa City IA 52243

Dr Robert Mislevy
Educational Testing Service
Mail Stop 03-T
Princeton NJ 08541

Dr Ivo Molenar
Faculteit Sociale Wetenschappen
Rijksuniversiteit Groningen
Grote Kruisstraat 2/1
9712 TS Groningen
The NETHERLANDS

Dr Eiji Muraki
Educational Testing Service
Mail Stop 02-T
Princeton NJ 08541

Dr Ratna Nandakumar
Educational Studies
Willard Hall Room 213E
University of Delaware
Newark DE  19716

Acad Prog & Research Branch
Naval Tech Training Command
Code N-62
NAS Memphis (75)
Millington TN  30854

Dr W Alan Nicewander
American College Testing
2201 North Dodge Street
PO Box 168
Iowa City IA 52243

Head
Personnel Systems Department
NPRDC (Code 12)
San Diego CA  92152-6800

Director
Training Systems Department
NPRDC (Code 14)
San Diego CA  92152-6800

Library NPRDC
Code 041
San Diego CA 92152-6800

Librarian
Naval Cntr for Applied Research
  in Artificial Intelligence
Naval Research Laboratory
Code 5510
Washington DC   20375-5000

Office of Naval Research
Code 3422
800 N Quincy Street
Arlington VA 22217-5660

ONR Resident Representative
New York City
33 Third Avenue - Lower Level
New York NY 10003-9998

Special Asst for Res Management
Chief of Naval Personnel
(PERS-O1JT)
Department of the Navy
Washington DC  20350-2000

Dr Judith Orasanu
NASA Ames Research Center
Mail Stop 239-1
Moffett Field CA  94035

Dr Peter J Pashley
Law School Admission Services
PO Box 40
Newtown PA 18940-0040

Wayne M Patience
American Council on Education
GED Testing Service Suite 20
One Dupont Circle NW
Washington DC 20036

Dept of Administrative Sciences
Code 54
Naval Postgraduate School
Monterey CA 93943-5026

Dr Peter Pirolli
School of Education
University of California
Berkeley CA  94720

Dr Mark D Reckase
American College Testing
2201 North Dodge Street
PO Box 168
Iowa City IA 52243

Mr Steve Reise
Department of Psychology
University of California
Riverside CA 92521

Mr Louis Roussos
University of Illinois
Department of Statistics
101 Illini Hall
725 South Wright Street
Champaign IL 61820

Dr Donald Rubin
Statistics Department
Science Center Room 608
1 Oxford Street
Harvard University
Cambridge MA 02138

Dr Fumiko Samejima
Department of Psychology
University of Tennessee
310B Austin Peay Bldg
Knoxville TN 37966-0900

Dr Mary Schratz
4100 Parkside
Carlsbad CA 92008

Mr Robert Semmes
N218 Elliott Hall
Department of Psychology
University of Minnesota
Minneapolis MN 55455-0344

Dr Valerie L Shalin
Dept of Industrial Engineering
State University of New York
342 Lawrence D Bell Hall
Buffalo NY 14260

Mr Richard J Shavelson
Graduate School of Education
University of California
Santa Barbara CA 93106

Kathleen Sheehan
Educational Testing Service
Mail Stop 03-T
Princeton NJ 08541

Dr Kazuo Shigemasu
7-9-24 Kugenuma-Kaigan
Fujisawa 251
JAPAN

Dr Randall Shumaker
Naval Research Laboratory
Code 5500
4555 Overlook Avenue SW
Washington DC 20375-5000

Dr Judy Spray
American College Testing
2201 North Dodge Street
PO Box 168
Iowa City IA 52243

Dr Martha Stocking
Educational Testing Service
Mail Stop 03-T
Princeton NJ 08541

Dr William Stout
University of Illinois
Department of Statistics
101 Illini Hall
725 South Wright St
Champaign IL 61820

Dr Kikumi Tatsuoka
Educational Testing Service
Mail Stop 03-T
Princeton NJ 08541

Dr David Thissen
Psychometric Laboratory
CB# 3270 Davie Hall
University of North Carolina
Chapel Hill NC 27599-3270

Mr Thomas J Thomas
Federal Express Corporation
Human Resource Development
3035 Director Row  Suite 501
Memphis TN 38131

Mr Gary Thomasson
University of Illinois
Educational Psychology
Champaign IL 61820

Dr Howard Wainer
Educational Testing Service
15-T Rosedale Road
Princeton NJ 08541

Elizabeth Wald
Office of Naval Technology
Code 227
800 North Quincy Street
Arlington VA 22217-5000

Dr Michael T Waller
Univ of Wisconsin-Milwaukee
Educ Psychology Department
Box 413
Milwaukee WI 53201

Dr Ming-Mei Wang
Educational Testing Service
Mail Stop 03-T
Princeton NJ 08541

Dr Thomas A Warm
FAA Academy
PO Box 25082
Oklahoma City OK 73125

Dr David J Weiss
N660 Elliott Hall
University of Minnesota
75 E River Road
Minneapolis MN 55455-0344

Dr Douglas Wetzel
Code 15
Navy Personnel R&D Center
San Diego CA 92152-6800

German Military Representative
Personalstammamt
Koelner Str 262
D-5000 Koeln 90
WEST GERMANY

Dr David Wiley
Sch of Educ and Social Policy
Northwestern University
Evanston IL 60208

Dr Bruce Williams
Dept of Educational Psychology
University of Illinois
Urbana IL 61801

Dr Mark Wilson
School of Education
University of California
Berkeley CA 94720

Dr Eugene Winograd
Department of Psychology
Emory University
Atlanta GA  30322

Martin F Wiskoff
PERSEREC
99 Pacific Street
Suite 4556
Monterey CA  93940

Mr John H Wolfe
Navy Personnel R&D Center
San Diego CA 92152-6800

Dr Kentaro Yamamoto
Educational Testing Service
Mail Stop 03-T
Princeton NJ 08541

Duanli Yan
Educational Testing Service
Mail Stop 03-T
Princeton NJ 08541

Dr Wendy Yen
CTB/McGraw Hill
Del Monte Research Park
Monterey CA 93940

Dr Joseph L Young
National Science Foundation
Room 320
1800 G Street NW
Washington DC 20550